Social cognitive theory suggests that a full understanding of human nature requires the study of three components: the person, the situation, and behavior (Bandura, 1986). A great deal of research in industrial/organizational psychology over the past hundred years has focused on the first component: the person. Considerable work has been invested in identifying which traits characterize an individual’s personality and thereby make him or her different from other people. Today, a consensus has emerged that the second-order structure of personality consists of five (plus or minus two) major personality dimensions, known as the Big Five. In the past decade, a number of meta-analyses (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, & McCloy, 1990; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Salgado, 1997) have shown that two of the five personality dimensions, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability, predict performance outcomes in many, if not all, jobs, while the other three personality traits (Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to Experience) are related to performance in some jobs or for specific criteria.
Less attention has been devoted to developing theory and research related to the influence of situations (Hattrup & Jackson, 1996; Murtha, Kanfer, & Ackerman, 1996; Peters & O’Connor, 1980; Stewart & Barrick, in press). Although there has been more discussion on these issues in the personality literature, there is a lack of theory related to the work context (Hattrup & Jackson, 1996). This is surprising given evidence that relationships between personality and performance are stronger when one accounts for the context a priori (Tett, Jackson, Rothstein, & Reddon, 1994). In short, meta-analytic true-score correlations between personality measures and performance tend to be significantly larger if researchers use their understanding of the job and organizational context (confirmatory versus exploratory analyses) to develop hypotheses about which personality traits are expected to be related to performance. Researchers thus seem capable of specifying which traits will be related to performance by accounting for situational demands (the job context). However, this approach provides no information about the process whereby the situation influences the relationship or about which aspects of the situation are crucial for moderating relationships with personality.

To advance research related to the situation, we need theory about how different settings influence relationships between personality and behavior. Although some work in the field of leadership has been done matching contexts and leader attributes (Fiedler, 1967), less work has been done in the field of motivation (Mitchell, 1997), which is particularly relevant for research on personality. We thus need to develop methods for conceptualizing the basic kinds of situations or, alternatively, identifying what variables are useful for comparing one situation with another. As a step toward this theoretical development, we focus on the distinction between competitive and cooperative situations. Although we agree that more dimensions will ultimately define work settings, these two have been shown to capture key differences in the social dynamics of work environments (Stewart & Barrick, in press).

The third component of the study of human nature involves behavior. Job analysts and others have devoted considerable effort to describing behavior at work (Harvey, 1991). In fact, Campbell (1991) argues that behavior is the only appropriate representation of performance in work contexts. However, there has not been enough
theoretical and empirical work linking individual differences (cognitive abilities, personality traits, and interests) with job behavior constructs (delegating and coordinating, exchanging information, operating machines), particularly through well-grounded theories of motivation. According to social cognitive theory, an understanding of relationships between individual differences and job behavior requires an understanding of the cognitive processes that link them.

As Davis and Luthans (1980, p. 285) have pointed out, a main focus of social cognitive theory is “to investigate the mediating effects that covert cognitive processes have on an otherwise observable sequence of events.” Cognition thus becomes the mediator that explains how situational factors and individual differences get translated into behavioral responses (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Manz & Stewart, 1997). A major purpose of this chapter is to advance research focusing on work behavior by explicitly describing the cognitive processes that link personality traits to that behavior. These cognitive processes reflect cognitive-motivational work intentions, which reflect basic goals that people pursue at work. These intentions provide a goal-focused explanation of why certain personality traits are associated with high levels of work performance.

Figure 3.1 presents a social cognitive model that we will develop to describe how traits, situations, and cognitive-motivational work intentions relate to each other and thereby influence behavior. As shown, personality traits link to work intentions, which in turn influence performance. These relationships are moderated by situational demands associated with competitive and cooperative settings. To develop the model, we discuss the cognitive motivational work intentions through which personality affects behavior, specifically define and explore the mediating mechanisms of motivation on the personality-performance relationship, and then discuss the influence of situational demands and opportunities on these relationships.

How Do Distal Personality Traits Relate to Job Performance?

In the past decade, our understanding regarding the nature of relationships between personality traits and performance has been considerably enhanced by the study of specific personality con-
structs, typically based on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, and meta-analytic research. These studies reveal that two of the five personality traits, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability, are universal predictors of overall job performance across nearly all jobs (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). In contrast, the other three traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experience) are contingent predictors of performance (Barrick et al., 2001). These traits relate to success in only a few jobs or with a few criteria. For example, Extraversion has been found to be related to performance in jobs with a large competitive social component.
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(sales, managers). Agreeableness is a valid predictor of performance in jobs with cooperative demands or opportunities (use of work teams). Finally, Openness to Experience has not been found to relate to many outcomes of interest at work.

One explanation for the disappointing conclusions about Openness is that this trait is the least well understood personality construct in the FFM literature (Digman, 1990). Consequently, the weak relationships found to date may be attributable to an inadequately defined construct. Some researchers have even begun questioning the utility of this trait. However, recent evidence suggests that Openness to Experience may be related to creativity (George & Zhou, 2001). Such research may eventually help illustrate the validity of this construct. However, given the current ambiguity associated with Openness, it is not contained in our model.

Moving beyond our current understanding of the relationship between specific personality traits and overall performance requires an exploration of the mechanisms through which these personality traits influence performance. Today, most researchers assume that distal personality traits affect performance primarily through proximal motivational mediators (Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1993; Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski, 2002; Kanfer, 1991). Recent reviews of the motivation literature (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Mitchell & Daniels, 2002) point out that the construct currently dominating the motivational literature is goals (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). Goals, combined with efficacy and expectancy beliefs, have been integrated into an overarching self-regulatory, social cognitive approach to motivation that focuses on what the individual can do, wants to do, and will do in terms of future behavior and how such beliefs and aspirations affect current action.

The cognitive processes attributed to goal setting that are motivationally relevant are arousal, focusing attention, and establishing intentions. Establishing intentions includes the allocation of effort, persistence, and some sort of task strategy. Personality variables could probably influence most, if not all, of these factors. For example, goal discrepancies (distance to goal achievement) presumably cause arousal and direct attention. Thus, people who are focused on accomplishing task-oriented goals but are not accomplishing their interpersonal goals would be aroused and focused...
on this issue. They would allocate their attention on interpersonal activities that might close this gap and think about a plan (effort and persistence) to accomplish that end. It is these allocation and effort and persistence decisions that we describe as self-regulatory.

Regulatory goals can be organized hierarchically as well (Crapanzano, James, & Citera, 1992), ranging from abstract goal orientations or response styles (for example, motivational orientations toward achievement and affiliation) to midlevel goals, such as personal strivings and personal projects, to more concrete goals or specific performance goals complete with precise action plans. We believe that to predict relatively general performance measures, one should adopt relatively general midlevel goals. These goals are likely to reflect personal strivings (Emmons, 1989), which are formulated as specific means of attaining certain desired end states (to be one of the highest performers in the department, for example) at work. However, personal strivings are not so precise as to contain fully detailed plans and actions. They also are not so broad as to be unnecessarily vague and imprecise regarding future-directed plans. Rather, personal strivings represent broad, general intentions or motives that direct future courses of action at work. Although much research has gone into the higher-level motivational orientations (VandeWalle, 1999; Dweck, 1986) and specific task goals (Locke & Latham, 1990), less work in industrial/organizational psychology has gone into the midrange goals.

Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, and Kasser (2001) examined ten fundamental motives that people strive to fulfill through satisfying events or experiences. Across three different studies, they found that motives labeled as self-esteem, relatedness, autonomy, and competence were strongly related to an individual’s most satisfying experiences. This suggests that people are motivated to achieve a sense of self-respect (self-esteem), meaningful contact with others (relatedness), enhanced perceived control (autonomy), and challenging work that demonstrates their own capabilities (competence). We believe that people incorporate these fundamental motives into their goals or personal strivings.

Two of these fundamental motives, striving for self-esteem and competence, should be related to goals or personal strivings associated with task achievement. Task-oriented employees have a strong desire to accomplish task-related goals as a means of expressing their
competence and to build self-esteem (Stewart & Barrick, in press). We categorize the goals or personal strivings associated with task orientation as representing Accomplishment Striving.

Accomplishment Striving reflects an individual’s intention to accomplish work tasks and is expected to be characterized by high task motivation. Behaviorally, Accomplishment Striving is likely to be expressed in a way that laypeople would call “work motivation”; these employees are likely to exert considerable task effort and maintain that effort over an extended period of time. We believe that Accomplishment Striving is cognitively represented and assessable as intentions. It differs from typical perceptions of motivation, however, as it relates to a generalized, individual difference measure representing intentions to exert effort and work hard. We believe it is likely caused by many determinants, including the person’s personality traits and environmental features such as instructing the person to try harder, offering incentives to perform well, or making the task meaningful or difficult.

The results of Sheldon et al. (2001) also underscore that social interactions at work, or relatedness, is a fundamental motive. Researchers have identified two broad motivational intentions related to social interactions (Hogan & Shelton, 1998; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). The first dimension captures goals directed toward obtaining acceptance and intimacy in personal relationships. We label this personal striving Communion Striving. At work, Communion Striving would be expressed by actions associated with “getting along with others.” The second dimension, called Status Striving, reflects goals directed toward obtaining power and dominance within a status hierarchy. At work, employees often achieve this by “getting ahead of others.” We think of these two constructs as separate measures that comprehensively depict the social dynamics of the work setting. In some sense, this distinction is one between the vertical organizational structure (interacting with superiors and subordinates) and the horizontal structure (dealing with peers). One of the major goals of this chapter is to introduce the fundamental difference that emerges from these two personal strivings toward relatedness. In addition, this distinction is likely to have important effects at the organizational level, as well as the individual level, a topic to which we will return.
The Effect of Personal Strivings on Personality-Performance Relationships

The three motivational constructs of Accomplishment Striving, Communion Striving, and Status Striving allow us to relate individual differences in personality to performance on a variety of jobs. In this section, we relate the four relevant personality traits to the motivational constructs.

Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability are personality traits that are likely to be universal predictors of performance across a variety of jobs. To apply our motivational mediator model to the case of these two traits, we assume that both affect performance through work motivation, particularly motivation related to Accomplishment Striving. Conscientious people set goals, are more committed to those goals, and exert more effort (Barrick et al., 1993; Gellatly, 1996). Thus, they are more “motivated” at work and strive to achieve. In contrast, neurotic employees (low in Emotional Stability) have significantly reduced motivation at work. Emotionally unstable people do not see themselves as worthy, are less confident, are frequently distracted by worrying and become obsessed with details, and are more dissatisfied with themselves, their jobs, and lives. Thus, they are less motivated to accomplish tasks at work, and if they are “motivated” at all, it is to avoid failure at work. Based on this reasoning, we believe these two personality traits will relate to performance through on-task effort or Accomplishment Striving at work.

The effects for Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability on performance through Accomplishment Striving should exist across jobs. First, these personality traits have been found to be universal predictors of performance. Therefore, they would be expected to be valid predictors in all or nearly all jobs, which reduces (but does not eliminate) concerns about the effect of situational demands on these relationships. Second, Accomplishment Striving is a fundamental cognitive-motivational variable that affects behavior in all jobs; it is hard to conceive of a job where an employee’s motivation to accomplish tasks will not affect performance. This may explain why Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability are universal predictors of performance. That is, if they are related to accomplishment
striving, which in turn has universal applicability to work in all jobs, the expectation is that these two traits would be valid predictors in all, or nearly all, jobs.

Turning to the two interpersonal personality traits, Extraversion and Agreeableness are expected to affect job performance through our other two cognitive-motivational work intentions: Status Striving and Communion Striving. Lucas, Diener, Grob, Suh, and Shao (2000) demonstrate that the core features of Extraversion are energy, ascendance, and ambition. The primary essence of Extraversion is thus a sensitivity to obtaining rewards rather than sociability. In fact, they argue that sociability appears to be an important feature of Extraversion because it provides more opportunities to achieve status and rewards. Consequently, Extraversion will be related to Status Striving rather than Communion Striving. In contrast, the fundamental features of Agreeableness appear to be primarily related to affiliation and friendliness (Digman, 1990). Consequently, Agreeableness will be linked to personal strivings that contribute to Communion Striving and not to those related to Status Striving.

Confirmation for these relationships between personality and motivational strivings is found in a recent study by Barrick et al. (2002). In a study of 164 sales representatives, Barrick et al. demonstrated that Conscientiousness ($r = .39$) and Emotional Stability ($r = .15$) were significantly related to Accomplishment Striving. Extraversion was correlated with Status Striving ($r = .48$) and Agreeableness with Communion Striving ($r = .15$). Barrick et al. also examined the links among Accomplishment Striving, Communion Striving, and Status Striving. In accordance with the model presented in Figure 3.1, Accomplishment Striving and Status Striving were related to performance. Similarly, as expected, Communion Striving in this competitive sales setting, was not related to performance. Furthermore, as suggested in Figure 3.1, Status Striving mediated the relationship between Accomplishment Striving and performance. As we explain below, we expect similar mediation through Communion Striving in cooperative settings. People thus appear to be ultimately motivated to accomplish tasks in order to achieve either communion or status, depending on their traits and the situational context.
How Do Situational Demands Affect the Personality-Performance Link?

An undergraduate student noted, “I am extraverted with my friends but introverted when in a large lecture classroom.” This statement, embodied by interactionists, indicates that a personality trait will be a significant predictor of behavior only in situations that are relevant to its expression and not so constrained as to disallow individual differences (Endler & Magnusson, 1976). To argue that situations do not matter implies that people will show powerful cross-situational consistency of responses. Yet to respond in exactly the same way across time and diverse situations would be maladaptive and is likely to result in many dysfunctional behaviors. Consequently, most researchers today recognize that to predict behavior with personality requires one to account for the situation (Kenrick & Funder, 1988). We believe personality will have its greatest effect on behavior when the situation is relevant to the trait’s expression and is weak enough to allow the person to choose how to behave in that situation (Stewart & Barrick, in press).

Although work psychologists have examined how aspects of the immediate work situation affect variance in performance (the job analytic literature), no taxonomy has been developed that incorporates both situational and trait effects (Murtha et al., 1996) on motivational mediators. This unfortunate circumstance has long been recognized (Peters & O’Connor, 1980). Although there are many dimensions across which the work environment can be meaningfully categorized, here we focus on one broad aspect of situations: the social setting.

Cooperation and Competitive Demands

Research illustrates that although several dimensions of work design have been identified, an important component of many, if not all, theories of work design relates to how individuals contribute to the organization through social inputs. For example, a fundamental design feature of structural contingency theory recognizes the importance of interdependence among people in the organization, particularly the vertical (the authority system) and lateral
relationships (the informal peer system). Similarly, at the organizational level, several dimensions of work design have been identified, but empirical research shows that many of them can be summarized by two parameters: (1) coordination or structuring of activities and (2) concentration of authority or interdependence among workers and managers (Pugh & Hickson, 1997). Thus, both individual- and organizational-level literatures on work design underscore the importance of determining how tasks are coordinated and controlled. These theories also assess the extent to which employees depend on each other for information, materials, and reciprocal inputs.

Ultimately, how the organization addresses the fundamental issues of coordination and control at work will have a substantive impact on the social dynamics of that work setting. One dimension along which the social aspects of work settings differ is how the firm structures the cooperative and competitive demands and opportunities in the organization. For example, an organization may design the job of marketing specialist so that employees work in a team that requires extensive interdependence to develop marketing campaigns. In another firm, the marketing specialist job may be designed to work independently of others. Furthermore, this organization may encourage multiple marketing specialists to vie for limited incentives or resources by making them available only to employees who have their marketing campaigns adopted by a customer. Thus, these two work settings will fundamentally differ in their cooperative and competitive social demands.

The importance of cooperative and competitive demands is supported by research that reveals that social aspects of work are psychologically meaningful to employees. How we see ourselves is substantially influenced by how we are defined in relation to others in the larger organization or society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Furthermore, Hogan (1996) argues that socioanalytic theory, which is based on an evolutionary perspective, identifies two critical social dimensions that people pursue. These dimensions address how individuals strive toward getting along with others (cooperation) and getting ahead of others (competition). People are thus predisposed to distinguish work settings according to the cooperative and competitive demands and opportunities of the situation. We propose that these distinctions will systematically affect
the strength of the relationship between relevant personality traits and work performance.

Research from an ecological perspective of personality similarly suggests cooperation and competition as fundamental features of environments. Central to this perspective is the concept of affordances, which Gibson (1979) defines as the fundamental utilities or action possibilities that the physical or social environment offers. Baron and Boudreau (1987) extend this concept and argue that in social settings, the opportunity to engage in certain behaviors is dependent on the actions of others. In particular, cooperative and competitive behaviors require reciprocal, coordinated behavior from others. Specifically, Baron and Boudreau suggest that “helpfulness requires a helper and a recipient, competition requires a rival, and dominance requires a subordinate” (p. 1223). Traits are thus expressed when other people in the organizational environment afford (allow and encourage) their expression. In particular, environments tend to differ on the extent to which they afford demonstrations of competitive and cooperative behavior (Baron & Boudreau, 1987).

In accordance with the ecological notion of affordances, our focus on cooperative and competitive demands is driven in part by an observation that behavior in social settings corresponds to key individual differences. The two personality traits that appear to have the strongest influence on social behavior are Extraversion and Agreeableness (Graziano, Hair, & Finch, 1997; Lucas et al., 2000). The typical extravert craves excitement, is adventurous, and tends to be assertive and dominant, as well as sociable. Thus, the social behavior of highly extraverted individuals is characterized by demonstrations of dominance and competitiveness (Lucas et al., 2000). In contrast, agreeable people are helpful, trusting, and friendly; they are cooperative and work well with others. Highly agreeable employees prefer social situations that are characterized by cooperation, close relationships, and interpersonal harmony and acceptance.

The effects of cooperative and competitive situational differences on Extraversion and Agreeableness have been empirically demonstrated. In a meta-analysis, Mount, Barrick, and Stewart (1998) reported that Agreeableness was the most important personality predictor of performance in jobs involving interactions
with others ($\rho = .27, n = 1,491$), particularly when those jobs involve interacting in teams ($\rho = .35, n = 678$). Results from Hough’s meta-analysis (1992) support this; she found that Agreeableness correlated with measures of teamwork ($r = .17$). Agreeableness thus appears to be an important predictor of behavior in cooperative settings.

Barrick and Mount (1991) found Extraversion to be a valid predictor of performance in management and sales jobs, which have a high social component related to influencing or leading others (sales: $\rho = .15, n = 2,316$; management: $\rho = .18, n = 11,335$). Stewart (1996) also illustrated that Extraversion is quite sensitive to the situational influence of rewards. In this study, Extraversion was related to higher performance only on performance dimensions that were explicitly rewarded (new sales or customer relations). Empirical findings thus suggest that Extraversion is related to performance in situations where one can acquire and maintain status (that is, in competitive situations).

**Autonomy**

In addition to cooperative and competitive demands, the level of autonomy in the situation is likely to have a fundamental impact on the relationship between personality traits and performance. The nature of this effect is quite different from that attributed to the influence of cooperative or competitive social demands at work, however. In this case, autonomy relates to the extent to which the external environment constrains a person’s freedom to behave in idiosyncratic ways (Barrick & Mount, 1993; Liu & Weiss, 2000). In strong situations, the organization exerts considerable pressure or demands to induce conformity. These controlling forces press the individual to behave in a specific way or exhibit a very narrow range of behaviors. In contrast, weak situations present few demands or presses to conform. In such settings, the individual determines which behaviors, if any, to undertake. The magnitude of the relationship between personality traits and behavior is thus greater in weak situations, or settings where people can perform their jobs in idiosyncratic ways.

A few studies demonstrate that personality is more useful in predicting behavior when autonomy is high than when it is low.
Data from 146 managers (Barrick & Mount, 1993) indicated that the predictive validity of two relevant personality predictors, Conscientiousness and Extraversion, was greater for managers in jobs high in autonomy compared with those in jobs low in autonomy. Lee, Ashford, and Bobko (1990) also found that the degree of autonomy a person has in his or her job moderated the relationships between Type A behavior and job performance, job satisfaction, and somatic complaints for employees from a variety of organizations. Based on these findings, we believe the degree of autonomy in the situation moderates the effects of all relevant personality predictors on performance.

The Role of Situational Factors

These situational effects are represented in the model (see Figure 3.1). First, the two interpersonal personality traits, Extraversion and Agreeableness, are expected to relate to behavior only when the relevant situational demands and opportunities are highly salient in the work setting. Specifically, Extraversion should relate to job performance only in settings that can be characterized as competitive work environments. In contrast, Agreeableness should predict performance behavior only when the work requires workers to cooperate. In a similar vein, Status Striving relates to performance only in competitive environments and Communion Striving only in cooperative settings.

The model also suggests that relevant personality traits have higher correlations with performance when the degree of autonomy in the job is high (a weak situation). Consequently, in jobs with high autonomy, the predictive validity of Extraversion should be higher if the job is competitive and the validity of Agreeableness should be higher for cooperative jobs. Furthermore, two personality traits, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability, are expected to be valid predictors of performance in nearly all jobs. In settings where the situational pressures are weak (high autonomy), we expect the relationship between these traits and performance also to be higher than where autonomy is low. Thus, the level of autonomy in the job will moderate the relationship between Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability with performance in all or nearly all jobs, and either Extraversion or Agreeableness...
on performance depending on the degree of cooperative or competitive demands at work.

The Barrick et al. (2002) study is also suggestive about the importance of accounting for the cooperative and competitive demands salient in the situation. In this study, the job (telemarketing) was characterized as one high in competitive demands (with high sales pressure and contact with the customer limited to one brief telephone interaction), but low in cooperative demands (the sales representative works alone and is not dependent on others for performance). Given these situational factors, Barrick et al. expected Status Striving, but not Communion Striving, to be a relevant mediator of the personality-performance relationship. As expected, they found that Status Striving was related to performance \( (r = .36) \) and Communion Striving was not \( (r = -.10) \). More important, as predicted by the model in Figure 3.1, the major portion of the relationship between Extraversion and job performance was indirect through Status Striving (approximately 76 percent of the effect is mediated by Status Striving). Although Agreeableness was related to Communion Striving, neither Agreeableness nor Communion Striving was related to success in this sales job.

These results have important implications for the model. In essence, they show that relevant personality traits were related to job success through motivational mediators. Although this study was not able to contrast multiple situations (it did not include data from multiple jobs that differed in cooperative or competitive social demands), it did support the linkage expected for jobs with high competitive demands.

We realize that the model is silent regarding the effect that cooperative demands may have on competitive demands, and vice versa. In fact, Figure 3.1 implies that these situational demands are relatively independent. This is not our intent. Given our limited knowledge about the nature of these relationships, particularly at work, we believe that future research should strive to clarify the relationship among these competing demands (the need for teamwork, yet the need to be individually recognized and rewarded). For the time being, we anticipate that researchers will examine the relations among these variables in jobs that are clearly high in cooperative demands or competitive demands.
Future Research Directions

The model that we present here focuses on the processes through which traits influence performance. A major contention of the mediational portion of the model is that traits are expressed through broad goals, or personal strivings. Although this perspective is generally supported by theory and empirical research, there are some additional ways that goals and goal properties might mediate the personality-situation relationship with behavior. For example, Mitchell and Wood (1994) point out that some goals focus on process while others focus on outcomes. People high on Agreeableness may be more motivated by process goals, and people high on Conscientiousness may prefer outcome goals. In addition, research could test to see the consistency of goals preferred across different hierarchical levels. Individuals high on communion striving, for example, should also embrace values reflecting the importance of interpersonal harmony at the highest level and working in teams at a lower task-specific level. Similar type consistency would be expected for Status Striving and Accomplishment Striving. Examinations of such consistencies and goal preferences are clearly warranted and provide a potentially fruitful path for additional research.

Another major dimension of goal-setting research focuses on whether goals should be set by the self, assigned, or set participatively with one’s boss. At least initially, we believe that personality factors might be related to preferences for these different strategies. For example, highly conscientious people might prosper with self-set goals, people high on Agreeableness might prefer the interpersonal process involved with participation, and emotionally stable people might prefer the concreteness and specificity of assigned goals. Thus, the goal construct and the goal-setting process also hold promise for further research on the mediating role between personality and behavior.

Sheldon and Elliot’s self-concordance model (1999) provides some interesting thoughts for guiding future research. This model suggests that people are more likely to persist at and derive well-being from goals congruent with enduring interests and values. This perspective suggests that extraverted individuals are likely to
work hardest in environments that afford competition, whereas agreeable individuals will work hardest in cooperative environments. However, Sheldon and Elliot also suggest that the attainment of self-concordant goals is key to individual well-being. Our model looks only at performance. Yet the self-concordance model suggests that agreeable individuals will derive satisfaction from working in cooperative environments, and extraverts will be happiest in competitive environments. Future models and research can likely benefit from directly examining the effects of personality not only on performance but also on employee satisfaction. More important, the model should be extended to other work behaviors, including withdrawal and counterproductive behavior.

The self-concordance model also suggests that competence, autonomy, and relatedness are primary mechanisms that ensure people will persist in goal-directed behavior. Our model is similar in its assertion that greater autonomy allows agreeable and extraverted people to pursue goals consistent with their trait preferences. The model is consistent with notions of relatedness in that it suggests that agreeable people prefer relating to others cooperatively, whereas extraverts prefer relating competitively. The model does not, however, specifically include a focus on competence. We believe that competence is likely to have important relationships with Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Accomplishment Striving. For example, the relationship between Conscientiousness and Accomplishment Striving may be stronger if the person has high competence on the task, particularly if there is considerable autonomy in the job. We encourage future researchers to explore the nature of these relationships.

The model we present here highlights ways that situational characteristics affect the relationship between personality traits and job success. Our model emphasizes interpersonal contextual dimensions (competitive and cooperative demands) as critical situational variables that affect these relationships. Researchers should explore the role of other situational variables. For example, the emotional demands or emotional labor of the work context may be an important situational factor to consider. At an extreme, emotionally taxing work can result in burnout, which has been consistently linked with organizational consequences such as increased turnover, stronger intentions to leave, negative work attitudes, and
reduced levels of performance (Brotheridge & Grandey, in press; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Personality traits like Emotional Stability and Extraversion are likely to be important predictors of burnout. Consequently, there may be value in assessing the emotional demands associated with various jobs on the personality—performance relationship. A taxonomy of emotional demands could focus on “emotional taxes” due to task demands (as with surgeons who face life-and-death decisions), interpersonal demands (such as sales representatives who have frequent interactions with challenging customers), and emotional control required by the job (for example, ambulance technicians who encounter emotionally demanding circumstances). With the development of a theoretically relevant taxonomy of emotional demands, we believe researchers could explore the effect these emotional factors have on the nature and magnitude of the relationship between specific personality traits and performance or affective outcomes.

Research on cognitive ability has illustrated that complexity of the job, as determined by job knowledge requirements, is an important determinant of the relationship between ability and performance (Hunter, 1986; Schmidt, Hunter, Outerbridge, & Trattner, 1986). Consequently, models of job performance must also include job complexity as an important situational variable. Is job complexity likely to be an important moderator for personality? We do not know. However, if it is, it may be because complexity is associated with greater discretion or autonomy, in addition to a need for more job-specific knowledge. Furthermore, if the job is too simple or too complex for the person’s skills, it may have implications for motivation (not intrinsically motivating if too simple a job) or anxiety (if too difficult, it may increase the emotional labor of the job). Given this, research that extends our understanding of the role of job complexity on personality-performance relationships is important.

While these alternative perspectives suggest areas where our model will likely be refined, we believe that both our general model of the effects of person and situation variables on behavior and our specific model of how four personality traits relate to motivation and subsequently to performance can guide research. In the general model, we have proposed that at least two situational constructs (cooperative demands and competitive demands) are required to explain the relationship between the two interpersonal
traits (Extraversion and Agreeableness) on performance. The influence of situational demands and opportunities relevant to these outcomes remains a relatively unexplored source of variance of potential importance to both researchers and practitioners alike. These frequently overlooked contextual factors are hypothesized to affect the level of observed performance, the relationship between personality and performance, and the personality-motivational-performance linkages. The limited empirical evidence available clearly justifies the need to explore the direct and interactive effects of situational demands as important determinants of these outcomes.

Conclusion

The model shown in Figure 3.1 is our interpretation of how specific distal personality traits, as well as situational factors, are related to important work behaviors on a day-to-day basis. This model emphasizes personal goals (strivings and projects) as the key proximal motivational variables through which our long-term dispositional tendencies are operationalized. Alternative theoretically relevant measures of motivation include expectancies and competency beliefs, affective variables, and subjective values and valences. We believe that focusing on cognitive-motivational goals captures much of the critical variance for the work motivation construct space relevant to these performance outcomes. Certainly, there is considerable support for the notion that cognitive processes (goals) are critical to understanding the relationship between person factors and job behaviors. Nevertheless, future research must address whether these goal-oriented variables adequately represent motivational effects.

Our model suggests that Accomplishment Striving is the engine through which the relevant social goals (either Status Striving or Communion Striving, depending on the situation) affect performance. The available data support this conjecture, but we still need direct comparisons of the effects of Accomplishment Strivings on either Status Striving and Communion Striving and, in turn, their effects on performance in a variety of work settings. This model also suggests that the explanation for the universal effects for Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability are due to their effects on Accomplishment Striving.
We have sought to show how person and situation factors are linked through motivational variables to predict a reasonably broad range of behavioral performance measures in various work contexts. Industrial/organizational psychologists have historically focused on the relationship between personality and performance. This chapter illustrates that we also need to account for situational determinants of behavior, as well as the mechanisms through which personality affects behavior. Pursuing this research will enable researchers to make progress on explaining both performance and affective work outcomes.

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