

Our Quest for a *Great Place to Work*:
Meaning *in* and *at* Work through the Fit Perspective

by

Anirban Kar
M. Sc., University of Lethbridge, 2013

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Peter B. Gustavson School of Business

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Abstract

Our work and the organization in which we work play significant roles in many of our lives. Yet, theoretically grounded understanding of when is it that the relationships with our work and that with our work environment make a *great place to work* is almost non-existent. So far the organizations that feature in the Fortune Best Companies to Work For, or the Forbes the Happiest Companies to Work For, or the Glassdoor Best Places to Work, etc., are considered as proxies for *great places to work*. However, the characterizations of the antecedents of these workplaces are fragmented, idiosyncratic, and confounding, as they cover a wide span of factors (e.g., pride, job satisfaction, flexibility, inspiring leadership, camaraderie, trust, work-life balance, etc.), and adopt a one-size fits all approach, without a theoretical underpinning, limiting their generalizability and usefulness.

In my dissertation, I addressed these shortcomings through the fit perspective and through the mechanism of meaning *in* and *at* work. I proposed the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, underpinned by identity (Stryker & Berke, 2000), social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and social information processing theories (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The model hypothesized that the employees' perception of a *great place to work* is built and sustained by meaning *in* work (from the relationship with the work itself) based on the underlying person-work fit, and by meaning *at* work (from the relationship with the work environment) based on the underlying person-supervisor, the person-group, and the person-organization fits.

I tested the proposed model using a mixed methods approach, with the help of three Studies. In Study 1, I conducted 26 semi-structured interviews to assess the face validity of the model and to obtain inputs for the survey instrument and for the scenario descriptions to be used in Study 2.

In Study 2, I tested the hypothesized model with the help of quantitative data gathered through a three-wave Main Survey with participants from MTurk (N=481), after two Pilot Surveys (N=95 and 247). I confirmed the results through Scenario Analysis with participants from MTurk (N=399). Out of the seven main variables in the proposed model, I developed scales to measure three variables (employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *at work*, and person-group fit), and refined the scales to measure four variables (person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-organization fit, and meaning *in work*). In Study 3, I conducted 45 structured interviews in order to gain a deeper understanding of the findings from Study 2.

The quantitative data gathered in Study 2 provided partial support to the proposed model, indicating that meaning *in work* partly mediated the relationship between person-work fit and employees' perception of a *great places to work*, and meaning *at work* partly mediated the relationship between person-organization fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. The data also indicated that meaning *at work* is the more significant predictor compared to meaning *in work*. Among the fits, person-organization fit mattered the most. Study 3 provided interesting insights and explanations about the findings from Study 2. The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* works around the problematic one-size fits all approach, acknowledges the differences among the employees in the understanding of and expectations from a *great places to work*, offers increased generalizability and a pathway to leaders to build *great places to work* from the employees' perspective, and contributes theoretically and empirically to Positive Organizational Scholarship.

Keywords: Employees' perception of a great place to work, meaning-through-fit model of great places to work, meaning *in work*, meaning *at work*, mixed methods, person-group fit

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the selfless sublime souls.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Purpose Overview

For many of us our relationship with our work defines our life (Gini, 2000). We spend large portions of our life at work and/or thinking about issues concerning work. The work provides us with an identity, a community, a social status, and a means of livelihood (Chalofsky, 2010; Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Our work influences and shapes the way we behave and live. The perceived pleasantness or the bitterness of the experiences in our work spill over to our lives outside of work, to our families, to other interests, and even to our health (Bambra, 2011; Shanafelt, 2009; Crouter, Perry-Jenkins, Huston & Crawford, 1989; Beehr & Newman, 1978).

Many of us are or have been employed in organizations. Our work experience is thus shaped not only by the relationship with the work itself but also by the way we perceive our relationship with the organization, with our colleagues and those that we serve and report to, and the views about the organization held by our friends, family and the society. Considering the overwhelming role that our work and the organization in which we work play in many of our lives, our well-being or lack of it depends to a large extent on the relationship with our work at the place we work. Thus, it would be useful to know more about when is it that, as employees in organizations, we perceive that the relationship with our work and that with our work environment make it a *great place to work*. In this dissertation I study this issue by examining the question: *When do employees perceive an organization to be a great place to work?*

Why Great Places to Work?

In this section I explain why I focus on “*great places to work*” and not on constructs such as the *best employer*, the *employer of choice*, the *quality of work life*, the *most admired companies* (Park, Song, Kim & Lim, 2015), etc. Typically a *great place to work* is one’s preferred work situation, where one feels that the relationship with one’s work and one’s work environment is such that one is likely to rate the organization on top of lists of places to work. The *great places to work* is a powerful construct, distinct from the others briefly described in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Constructs Similar to a *Great Place to Work*

Construct	Description
Best employers	Organizations that adopt a “holistic approach to building a work environment in which employees are constantly engaged and committed to business success” (Looi, Marusz & Baumruk, 2004, p. 1).
Employer of choice	“Organizations that outperform their competition in attracting, developing, and retaining people with business-required talent” (Joo & McLean, 2006, p. 234) through innovative and compelling human resource practices. These employers succeed in retaining their employees over a long period of time, despite other employment opportunities (Herman & Gioia, 2000).
Quality of work life	“An individual’s evaluative reactions to, and satisfaction with, his/her work and the total working environment” (Sinha, 2012, p. 37) and an organization’s response “to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work” (Robbins, 1989, p. 207).
Most admired companies	Organization that perform well on a wide range of parameters such as the quality of management and products or services, the innovation, the financial performance, the ability to attract and retain talent, the socially and environmentally responsible behavior, and the use of assets (Joo & McLean, 2006).

Although the above constructs overlap each one is characterized by a dominant logic. The *best employers* construct emphasizes the alignment of the employees to the organization’s success. The *employers of choice* focuses on the recruitment and retention of the best talent by the organization. These two constructs are led by the need of the organization whereas the idea of *great places to work* distributes the focus between the employees and the organization. Employees’

needs are at the core of *quality of work life* unlike the construct of *great places to work* is more balanced. The understanding of *most admired companies* is more specific than that of the *great places to work*, limiting its usefulness. In addition, *most admired companies* lean towards being the more excellent organizations while the *great places to work* lean towards being the more “livable” organizations (Mitchell, 1985, p. 354). For a brief description of the *great places to work* and several similar constructs please see Appendix 1.

This dissertation focuses on *great places to work* and not on the other similar constructs for three reasons. First, being a *great place to work* is an aspiration that is more relevant for *both the employees and the managers of organizations* than aspirations such as the *best employer*, the *employer of choice*, the *quality of work life*, and the *most admired companies*, which lean more towards either the employees’ or the organizations’ aspirations. The idea of a *great place to work* is more balanced and holistic. Second, the construct of *great place to work* captures the fluidity of these aspirations more than those conveyed by the definitive constructs such as the best employer, the employer of choice, and the most admired companies. “*Great*” retains a dynamic and evolving nature of aspiration while the others appear to convey a sense that we have arrived at a final destination. Moreover, the *great place to work* is a more general construct, which does not lean towards a particularistic aspect such as “happiness” or “admiration.”

Third, the label *great places to work* is open to a multitude of interpretations providing cognitive flexibility. The word “great” may mean different things to different people but the construct itself offers a broad appeal. This description is also more in sync with my personal motivation to understand what a *great place to work* means to the unique people who work therein in order to better ascertain the boundary conditions and nuances associated with this powerful construct. Having distinguished *great places to work* from similar constructs, and explained the

reasons behind its selection as the focus of this dissertation, I now embark on discussing *great places to work* in greater detail.

Great Places to Work: An Overview

Surprisingly there is very little academic research on the construct of *great places to work*. Among the few existing studies, Butler (2014) defines *great places to work* “as a firm whose employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs (Chan, Gee & Steiner, 2000; Keller, 1997) as well as positive perceptions of their work environment (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Yoon, Beatty & Suh, 2001)” (p. 1). In the practitioner literature, Great Places to Work Institute (GPWI), which publishes annual rankings of the Best Companies to Work For, on behalf of the *Fortune* magazine and other organizations (GPWI, 2015a), suggests that “from the employee’s perspective, a great workplace is one where they: Trust the people they work for; have pride in what they do; [and] enjoy the people they work with” (GPWI, 2014, p. 1). Levering (1988), the CEO and co-founder of the GPWI, suggests that *great places to work* are those organizations which allow high quality “... relationships between employees and their leaders, between employees and their jobs, and between employees and each other” (p. 4). However, these characterizations of *great places to work* are confounded by a myriad other somewhat idiosyncratic suggestions at the *individual*, *leadership*, *work group*, and *organizational levels*. At the *individual level*, factors such as good physical workspace and compensation, recognition, caring human resource, learning and career development opportunities, flexibility, job satisfaction, challenging work, etc., have been suggested to characterize *great places to work* (Park et al., 2015; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014).

At the *leadership level*, it is suggested that *great places to work* have inspiring, authentic, and servant leadership (Henderson, 2011; Love & Singh, 2011; McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 2010). At the *group level*, factors such as team spirit, mutuality, cohesiveness, group focused processes, quality relationship, authentic behavior, collaboration, diversity are stated to signal *great places to work* (Park et al., 2015; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Crainer, 2014; Taskinen, 2011). Finally, at the *organizational level*, studies suggest that factors such as low levels of hierarchy, consistent assessment practices, autonomy, focus on employee wellness and engagement, work-life balance, safety orientation, fun work environment, transparency, accountability, civility and networking opportunities, focus on all stakeholders, corporate citizenship behavior, community oriented policies, social goals, and well laid out and easily accessible ethics statement are indicative of *great places to work* (Hoover & Pepper, 2014; Philipsen, 2014; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Bakker, 2010; Bernardi, Bosco & Vassill, 2006; DeCotiis, Sullivan, Hyatt, & Avery, 2004; van Marrewijk, 2004; Joyce, 2003). All put together this is an unwieldy laundry list of factors which can be overwhelming.

There are two major deficiencies in the existing literature on *great places to work*. First, the one-size fits all approach is problematic considering the differences between individuals in how they respond to the same factor or stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), the varying ways in which an individual makes sense of the same factor or stimuli over a period of time (Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999), and the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001). Second, the literature does not account for the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255), or *why* the enumerated factors make an organization a *great place to work* (Park et al., 2015; Zorn, Roper & Richardson, 2014; McCord, 2014). In other words, the applicability of the existing studies is limited because it may not work to ‘cherry pick’ and promote selected factors across an organization/organization(s)

without knowing whether those factors are relevant for a particular employee situated in a particular workplace and *why*. In this dissertation I address these two deficiencies through the fit perspective and through the mechanism of meaning *in* and *at* work, and theoretically and empirically underpin both.

Significance of the Research

Digging deeper into understanding *great places to work* is particularly significant because of four main reasons. First, studies indicate that organizations who feature in the Best Companies to Work for list compiled by GPWI, oft-used proxy for *great places to work*, enjoy a slew of competitive advantages (Ballou, Godwin & Shortridge, 2003; Fulmer, Gerhart & Scott, 2003). These organizations have an edge in attracting talent (Pok, 2015; Saini, Rai & Chaudhary, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010; Joyce, 2003; Fulmer, Gerhart & Scott, 2003), benefit from higher engagement levels, stable positive employee attitudes, and lower voluntary turnover (Dineen & Allen, 2016; Kusuma & Madasu, 2015; Fulmer et al., 2003), elicit better customer service (Butler, 2014; Simon & DeVaro, 2006), show resilience (Carvalho & Areal, 2015), enjoy greater productivity and growth potential (Butler, Armstrong, Ellinger & Franke, 2016), exhibit superior financial performance (Butler et al., 2016; Sum, 2014; Edmans 2012; Edmans 2011; Ballou et al., 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003), especially in the long run (Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003), and experience significant increases in the stock price by being included in the list (Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003). Moreover, the widespread media coverage of the annual publication of GPWI's rankings offers these organizations opportunities to build reputation, establish distinct identity, attract customers and investors (Pok, 2015; Love & Singh, 2011; Joyce, 2003), and gain a higher degree of legitimacy (Zorn et al., 2014). The positive outcomes of inclusion in the GPWI's rankings are more pronounced for organizations that appear consistently

in the rankings and for organizations that appear in the more recent rankings (Saini et al., 2014). The competitive advantages enjoyed by these organizations certainly call for a good understanding of when employees rate an organization a *great place to work*.

Second, it is timely and important to probe the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255) or the *experienced meaning* that triggers the perceptions of a *great place to work* because a few organizations designated near the top of the list of Best Companies to Work For were subsequently mired in controversies, which raised serious questions about the legitimacy and purpose of those organizations. For example, Enron featured in the GPWI’s list of Best Companies to Work For in 1999, 2000, and 2001 (GPWI, 2015b), 2001 being the year in which massive frauds were discovered in Enron resulting in its liquidation (Johnson, 2006). A recent example is that of Lehman Brothers, an organization that regularly featured in the GPWI’s list of Best Companies to Work For (GPWI, 2015b), yet was in the negative spotlight during and after the global financial crisis. Such instances beg closer examination of the existing frameworks used to assess *great places to work*.

Third, given that our work and the organization in which we work play an overwhelmingly critical role in our lives, wanting our organizations to be *great places to work* is likely to be a widely held aspiration. In the spirit of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS), which focuses on positive human potential and which seeks to extend research into “positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations and their members” (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003, p. 4), the onus is on us to understand more about when do we perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*. Finally, given the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001) we need a greater understanding of strategies that work in environments which are diverse. The one-size fits all

approach will no longer be effective in organizations with employees from different genders, ethnicities, age groups, personalities, religions, physical abilities, cultures, academic standing, functional background, and general place in life.

Personal Motivation

The seeds of my interest in this research question may have been sown several years ago when I quit my first job in a large government owned business, even though it promised a secure job for a lifetime. A few years into my career I struggled to rationalize the significance of the contribution I made as accounting and finance manager in large business organizations. I yearned to engage in something more purposeful. During the journey in my PhD program I stumbled upon Positive Organizational Scholarship and felt that I had discovered my home. In hindsight I realize that I was looking for meaning *in* and *at* work which wasn't apparent to me in my work and in the organizations where I worked at the time. I think that my underlying motivation for this research is to be a part of the Positive Organizational Scholarship and contribute to the growing body of research around the pro-social dimension of work and organizations (e.g., Steenkamp & Basson, 2013; Elangovan, Pinder & McLean, 2010; Grant, Dutton & Rosso, 2008; van Marrewijk, 2004; Margolis & Walsh, 2003) by trying to increase our understanding about how important it is to us to experience meaning *in* and *at* work or a sense that our work at the place we work has a deeper purpose and serves a greater cause (Wrzesniewski, 2003).

I have also been following the media hype around *great places to work* such as those that follow the publications of the *Fortune* Best Companies to Work For, or the *Forbes* the Happiest Companies to Work For, etc., and wondered about the generalizability of the claims made about the factors that make an organization a *great place to work*. When I tried to personalize the claims made they didn't seem to resonate. For example, the GPWI emphasizes trust, pride and

camaraderie in a *great place to work*, however, it really didn't work with members of the team I had in the last organization I worked. It was very important for one of the team members to get a promotion every year, another member would be put off if the work or the conversation wasn't challenging enough, and yet another would want to avoid confrontation at any cost. Moreover, initiatives such as "Fun at Work," with the intention to build camaraderie and to de-stress, worked well for some, while for others the work itself was fun and the "Fun at Work" sessions were actually a torture. Thus my ruminations around the purpose of work and that of *great places to work* are really the two major motivations that has driven my research interest into this area.

Theory Development Overview

In this dissertation I propose a *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, a framework that helps to understand when employees may perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*. The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* is in the spirit of the Positive Organizational Scholarship (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003), and underpinned by identity (Stryker & Berke, 2000), social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and social information processing theories (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The model hypothesizes that the employees' perception of a *great place to work* is built and sustained by the psychological significance, or the meaning *in* work (from the relationship with the work itself) based on the person-work¹ fit, and the meaning *at* work (from the relationship with the work environment) based on the person-supervisor, the person-group, and the person-organization fits.

¹ Although person-job fit is the more prevalent term in the literature I use the term person-work fit as work makes a broader representation than the concept of job. Job may be construed as a piece of work (OED, 2016).

The structure of the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* is based on the factor-psychological state-outcome framework used in the job characteristics model of work motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). A psychological state is the subjective or the introspective state experienced by a person at a given time and place triggered by some underlying factors or stimulus (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Thorne, 1966). The psychological state mediates or drives the outcome of those factors, that is, the psychological state is the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255; Baron & Kenny, 1986). In the proposed model, the *outcome* is the *employees’ perception of a great place to work*, the *psychological states* are *meaning in work* triggered by the factor perceived *person-work fit*, and *meaning at work* triggered by the factors perceived *person-supervisor*, *person-group*, and *person-organization fits*.

The fits can be supplementary or based on similarities, and complementary or based on a match between needs and supplies and/or that between demands and abilities (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This fit perspective is a precursor to the factors through which the existing literature characterizes the antecedents of *great places to work*. In fact, the fit perspective offers an alternate approach to assess when organizations are perceived as a *great places to work*, side stepping the pitfalls of the one-size fits all approach. The fit perspective acknowledges the differences in the expectations from and the understanding of a *great place to work* among the employees and offers a matching approach.

While the extent of fit with work, supervisor, group and organization is a basic requirement, I propose that it is the positive meaning *in* and *at* work that the fits trigger which actually enhances the perceptions that an organization is a *great place to work*. Studies show similar influence of meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, in that they mediate the relationship between job

enrichment, task significance, task identity, autonomy, feedback and skill variety, and work engagement (Schnell, Höge & Pollet, 2013; May, Gilson & Harter, 2004). The meaning making in the context of work signifies a psychological state created by the subjective interpretation of a “deeper purpose” (Wrzesniewski, 2003, p. 298) that we think our work serves, and that the environment where the work is situated serves (Ariely, Kamenica & Prelec, 2008). Meaning *in* work is a psychological state derived “from the intrinsic qualities of the work itself, the goals, the values, and the beliefs that the work is thought to serve” and pertains to the role or “what am I doing?” and not from “where that work is done” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). Meaning *at* work is the psychological state derived from “the organizational community within which the work is embedded” and pertains to membership or “where do I belong?” and not from “what one does” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). In the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, I also suggest that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are not mutually exclusive but support each other.

Research Design Overview

The hypothesized *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* was empirically tested using a mixed methods approach, and with the help of three studies. In Study 1, qualitative data was gathered through open-ended semi-structured interviews of 26 diverse participants, with the objective to assess the face validity of the proposed model and to obtain inputs for the survey instrument and for the scenario descriptions to be used in Study 2. In Study 2, the proposed model was tested with the help of quantitative data gathered through a three-wave Main Survey with participants from MTurk (N=481), after two Pilot Surveys (N=95 and 247), each with a different set of diverse participants. The scales for the seven main variables in the model were developed/refined with the help of data from Study 1 and Pilot Surveys 1 and 2. The results from

the Main Survey were confirmed with the help of a Scenario Analysis with participants from MTurk (N=399). The quantitative data was analyzed with the help of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) and multiple regression. In Study 3, qualitative data was gathered, through 45 structured interviews, with the objective to gain a deeper understanding of the findings from Study 2. The interviewees in Study 3 were diverse and there was a preference for experts in management.

Organization of the Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation is organized as follows. In Chapter 2, I review the current understanding of a *great place to work*, and clarify what I mean by employees' perception of a *great place to work*. Further, I review the existing literature on the antecedents and the outcomes of *great places to work*, and identify the gaps therein. In Chapter 3, I explain and hypothesize the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, and elaborate on each element of the model. In Chapter 4, I commence with the research design overview and elaborate on the rationale and design of each of the three studies conducted. In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, I describe the samples, the procedure, and the results of Studies 1, 2 and 3, respectively. In Chapter 8, I discuss the overall results, the theoretical and the empirical contributions, the managerial implications, and the limitations, and lay out the future research agenda. Finally, in Chapter 9, I conclude with an overview and a reflection.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I explain what I mean by employees' perception of a *great place to work*, followed by a review of the existing conceptualizations of a *great place to work*. Next, I discuss the current state of knowledge on the antecedents and the outcomes of *great places to work*. Finally, I review the gaps in the literature.

Employees' Perception of a Great Place to Work

Employees' perception of a *great place to work* consists of “*employees*” and their “*perception*” of a “*great place to work*.” *Employees*, for the purposes of this research, denote those who work full-time or part-time in an organization, including employees designated as consultants or associates, that is, they are the ones who work for an organization in exchange for a contractual financial remuneration. In other words, employees who work voluntarily are excluded from this research as the motivation in such cases is quite different (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). *Perception* signifies “the subjective interpretation of the sensory stimuli affected by both sensation and other subjective factors such as previous experience, expectations, emotion, and cognitive processing” (Lee, 2004, p. 30). The emphasis is on the subjective interpretation of the reality that a person's perceptual system provides and not on the reality itself (Johns & Saks, 2014). In other words the “accuracy” of the perception is not important but the “realities” based on the sense made through the perceptions is what matters (Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld, 2005). Although the perceptions are based on individual biases (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) it is this perceived understanding which forms the basis of our behavior (Saks & Ashforth, 1997) and hence considered the essence of the research question: When do employees perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*?

In *great place to work* the word “great” has myriad meanings and applications, as listed in the Oxford English dictionary, several of which can apply to an organization in the context of this research, such as “of considerable importance, significance, or distinction; ... weighty, distinguished; famous, renowned; impressive, highly commendable, praiseworthy ... most important of its kind; pre-eminent; chief, main ... outstanding ... especially remarkable ... excellent, admirable, very pleasing, first-rate” (OED, 2016, p. 1). *Place to work* represents more than a physical workplace and includes the perceptions about the work environment, that is, perceptions of the relationships with the work, the supervisors, the colleagues, and the organization. The scope of “place” to work is also broad to include work from home or work in multiple organizations/locations.

Another line of inquiry somewhat similar to that on *great places to work* is *organizational climate*. In this dissertation, I focus on *great places to work* because it is a broader construct about the individual’s relationship with the work as well as the work environment, unlike *organizational climate* where the focus is primarily on the “social context ... and its link to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of organizational members” (Brock, Zmud, Kim & Lee, 2005, p. 89). In the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, proposed in this dissertation, I disaggregate the *organizational climate* (e.g., the social context) into the supervisor, the work-group, and the other aspects of the organization (structure, culture, reputation and purpose). The disaggregation is more layered than *organizational climate*, and more bounded compared to the fluidity surrounding the understanding of *organizational climate* (Denison, 1996). Having distinguished between organizational climate and *great places to work*, I now discuss several of the more commonly used existing conceptualizations of the latter.

Great Places to Work

Although there are a few academic studies which examine the antecedents and several which study the outcomes of *great places to work*, they generally avoid defining the construct. When it is defined, most studies adopt the definition suggested by the Great Places to Work Institute (e.g., Park et al., 2015; Carvalho & Areal, 2015; Henderson, 2013; Soinen, 2013; Areal & Carvalho, 2012; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Fulmer et al., 2003). An exception in the academic literature, is Butler's (2014) attempt to define a "great firm to work for." Please see Table 2.1 for a summary of the definitions and the dimensions of *great places to work*. The first three focus on antecedents while the latter two describe the characteristics of a *great place to work*. Levering (1988), the CEO and co-founder of the Great Places to Work Institute (GPWI), in his book, *A great place to work: What makes some employers so good (and most so bad)*, proposes that high quality relationships are what make a *great place to work*. GPWI fine-tunes the high quality relationship orientation to suggest that organizations with high levels of trust, pride and camaraderie among the employees are *great places to work*. Burchell and Robin (2010), members of the senior management team at GPWI, in their book, *The Great Places to Work: How to build it, how to keep it, and why it matters*, describe each dimension. Please see Figure 2.1 for an overview of the dimensions.

Table 2.1: Conceptualizations of a *great place to work*

Source	Definition	Dimensions
GPWI (2014)	“From the employee’s perspective, a great workplace is one where they: Trust the people they work for; have pride in what they do; enjoy the people they work with From the manager’s perspective, a great workplace is one where they: achieve organizational objectives; with employees who give their personal best; and work together as a team/family in an environment of trust” (p.1)	Trust, pride, camaraderie (from the employees’ perspective)
Levering (1988), the CEO and co-founder of the GPWI	Great places to work are those organizations which allow high quality “... relationships between employees and their leaders, between employees and their jobs, and between employees and each other” (p. 4).	Relationships
Norquist, Gilbert, King, Brown & Clarke (2002) based on a case study about SEARS	“In becoming a great place to work, Sears has three primary objectives: create an environment for personal growth and development; provide support for ideas and innovation; empower and involve teams and individuals” (p. 258)	Growth and development, support for ideas and innovation, empowerment
Moran Jr. (2009) essay in <i>Library Leadership & Management Journal</i>	“... personal fulfillment, achievement of personal goals, and personal needs coincide with the goals of (the) workplace” (p. 47)	Alignment
Butler (2014)	“A great firm to work for is defined as a firm whose employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs (Chan, Gee & Steiner, 2000; Keller, 1997) as well as positive perceptions of their work environment (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Yoon, Beatty & Suh, 2001)” (p. 1)	Attitude towards the job, perception about the work environment



Figure 2.1: Dimensions of Great Places to Work as proposed by GPWI (Burchell & Robin, 2010, p. 4)

Burchell & Robin (2010) suggest that trust comprises of credibility, respect and fairness. Trust in the form of credibility represents the perceived degrees of transparency, competence and integrity; trust in the form of respect signifies the perceived levels of support, collaboration, and caring; and trust in the form of fairness is the perceived degree of equity, impartiality, and justice. Pride represents the degree to which we think our work makes a difference, and the degree to which we find our team and organizational accomplishments meaningful. Camaraderie denotes the sense of intimacy, hospitality, and community. GPWI states on their website that the above conceptualization is informed by “over 25 years of analysis of employees’ own opinions, is universal and consistent year-over-year, country-to-country [and] applies not only to all organizations but to companies with diverse employee demographics” (GPWI, 2014, p. 1). However, the statistical validity and reliability of the GPWI surveys, based on which the above assertions are made, is not available in the public domain.

The GPWI uses two surveys to evaluate organizations. Two-thirds of the total score comes from the first survey called the Great Place to Work, Trust Index (Edmans, 2012). The participants consist of 350 randomly selected employees of each organization who respond to a 57-question survey that cover the proposed dimensions of the *great place to work*. Please see Table 2.2 for an extract of the survey.

Table 2.2: Extract from Trust Index Survey Questions

Dimension	Subdimension	Sub-subdimension	Statement
Credibility	Two-way communication	Informative communication	Management keeps me informed about important issues and changes.
		Accessible communication	I can ask management any reasonable question and get a straight answer.
Respect	Competence		
	Integrity		
	Support		
	Collaboration		
Fairness	Equity	Caring	Work environment This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work.
			Personal life Management shows a sincere interest in me as a person, not just an employee.
			Pay I feel I receive a fair share of the profits made by this organization.
Pride	Team		Membership Everyone has an opportunity to get special recognition.
Camaraderie	Intimacy	Corporate Image	[None] I'm proud to tell others I work here.
Community	Hospitality		Enjoyment This is a fun place to work.
			Welcome When you join the company, you are made to feel welcome.

Note: Adapted from “The link between employee satisfaction and firm value, with implications for corporate social responsibility,” by A. Edmans, 2002, p. 6. All survey questions are copyrighted by the Great Place to Work Institute (Edmans, 2012).

The remaining one-third of the total score comes from the second survey, Culture Audit, with input gathered from management on issues such as the organization’s demographic makeup, pay and benefits programs, hiring practices, methods of internal communication, training, recognition programs, and diversity efforts (Butler, 2014; Andrade, 2013). Please see Table 2.3

for an extract of the Culture Audit survey. The Great Place to Work Institute also reviews other inputs relating to the organization such as employee handbooks, annual reports and media reports. An organization maybe excluded from evaluation in case adverse news about the organization comes to light that may significantly damage employees' faith in management (Levering & Moskowitz, 2005).

Table 2.3: Extract from Culture Audit Survey Questions

Topic	Question
Inspiring	How do you inspire employees to feel that their work has more meaning than being "just a job"?
Speaking	What are the distinctive ways in which management . . . shares information . . . with employees?
Listening	What avenues are available for employees to communicate with management?
Thanking	How does your company show appreciation and/or recognition for employees' good work and extra effort?
Caring	Please describe any special or unique benefits/perks that you offer.
Celebrating	In what ways does your company celebrate its successes?

Note: Adapted from "The link between employee satisfaction and firm value, with implications for corporate social responsibility," by A. Edmans, 2002, p. 6. All survey questions are copyrighted by the Great Place to Work Institute (Edmans, 2012).

In a case study of SEARS Canada, Norquist et al. (2002) quote the construct of *great places to work*, understood by SEARS, as to create "an environment for personal growth and development, provide support for ideas and innovation, (and) empower and involve teams and individuals" (p. 258). In the journal of *Library Leadership & Management*, Moran Jr. (2009) suggests that in a *great place to work* personal fulfillment, achievement of personal goals, and personal needs coincide with the goals of (the) workplace" (p. 47). Another definition of a *great place to work* is that by Butler (2014). In his dissertation, which examines the performance of Great Firms to Work For (GFWF), Butler (2014) defines GFWF "as a firm whose employees have

positive attitudes towards their jobs (Chan, Gee & Steiner, 2000; Keller, 1997) as well as positive perceptions of their work environment (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Yoon, Beatty & Suh, 2001)” (p. 1). However, the dissertation does not elaborate further on the definition and uses the GPWI’s Best Companies to Work For, Glassdoor.com’s Employees’ Choice Award winners, and Careerbliss.com’s Happiest Companies in America as proxies for GFWF. Other conceptualizations or definitions of *great places to work* have not been attempted in the academic literature.

Great Places to Work: The Antecedents

What makes an organization a *great place to work*? Drawing from the literature, this section addresses the question first with a brief background, followed by deliberation on the factors at the work, the supervisor, the group, and the organization levels. The section then discusses two proposed models of *great places to work* and concludes with a discussion about the gap in the literature.

Although there are some hints in the 60s and the 70s about the antecedents of *great places to work* (e.g., Herzberg, 1966; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) research focus on this construct became more mainstream with the publication of a ranking of the 100 best companies to work for in America in 1984 by Robert Levering and Milton Moskowitz and with the foundation of the Great Places to Work Institute (Burchell & Robin, 2010). The institute suggests that the factors which contribute to pride, camaraderie, and trust (consisting of credibility, respect, and fairness), make an organization a *great place to work* (Fortune, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010). Following the work of Robert Levering and Milton Moskowitz several practitioners and a few academics tried to identify the factors that make organizations *great places to work*. Please see Appendix 2 for a

comprehensive list of these factors. The findings of these efforts are described with respect to *the work, the leadership, the work-group, and the organization*.

With respect to *the work*, the factors that contribute to pride in the work (Butler et al., 2016), the challenge that the work offers (Mencl & Lester, 2014) and job satisfaction (Butler, 2014) are factors that make a place to work great. With respect to the *supervisor*, the important factors identified were visionary, authentic and inspiring (Henderson, 2011; Love & Singh, 2011) and/or servant leadership (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 2010), committed to create a sense of community, to encourage employees to take pride in their work (Love & Singh, 2011), to include societal good in the organizations' mission (Henderson, 2011), to act as mentors (Philipsen, 2014), and to formulate people-first policies (van Marrewijk, 2004).

With regard to the *work-group*, studies suggest that the sense of camaraderie is a key factor that makes an organization a *great place to work* (Butler et al., 2016; Park et al., 2015; Butler, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010). Studies also propose that team spirit (Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013), a sense of community (Burchell & Robin, 2010), mutuality (Crainer, 2014), cohesiveness (Taskinen, 2011), group processes (Henderson, 2013; Mencl & Lester, 2014), quality of relationship between the members (van Marrewijk, 2004), authentic behavior of the team members, collaboration (Park et al., 2015; Mencl & Lester, 2014), and the diversity in the team (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Joyce, 2003), each also contribute to making an organization a *great place to work*.

At the *organizational level* the organization's structure, culture and reputation all seem to matter. *Organizational structure* is "the formal allocation of work roles and the administrative mechanisms to control and integrate work activities" (Child, 1972, p. 2). Studies find evidence that

good physical workspace (Love & Singh, 2011), caring human resource practices (Park et al., 2015; Love & Singh, 2011; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010), learning and career development opportunities (Park et al., 2015; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Joyce, 2003; Smith, 2002), compensation (Park et al., 2015; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Love & Singh, 2011), recognition (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014; Philipsen, 2014), flexibility (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010), consistent assessment practices (Philipsen, 2014), low levels of hierarchy (Henderson, 2013), and team management approach (Dutch, 2015) are factors that make an organization a *great place to work*.

Organizational culture is the “complex set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and symbols that define the way in which a firm conducts its business” (Barney, 1986, p. 657). A culture of trust through credibility, respect, and fairness (Butler et al., 2016; Park et al., 2015; Philipsen, 2014; Butler, 2014; Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013; Burchell & Robin, 2010) appear to be the most significant factors those are likely to make an organization a *great place to work*. Other identified factors are focus on employees as an asset and not as a cost or a liability (van Marrewijk, 2004), autonomy (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014), employee wellness (Philipsen, 2014; Joyce, 2003) and engagement (Kusuma & Madasu, 2015; Bakker, 2010), safety orientation (Philipsen, 2014), work-life balance (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Philipsen, 2014; Joyce, 2003), gender diversity (Bernardi, Bosco & Vassill, 2006), fun work environment (DeCotiis, Sullivan, Hyatt, & Avery, 2004; Joyce, 2003), transparency (Philipsen, 2014; Love & Singh, 2011; Taskinen, 2011; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010), accountability, civility and networking opportunities (Philipsen, 2014), and focus on all stakeholders (DeCotiis et al., 2004).

Organizational reputation is the “generalized awareness or visibility of the firm ... [or] ... being known, ... perceived predictability of organizational outcomes and behavior ... [or] ... being

known for something, ... [and] ... perceptions ... of the overall organization as good, attractive, and appropriate” (Lange, Lee & Dai, 2011, p. 155). Positive organizational reputation is also an important factor that makes an organization a *great place to work*. Studies suggest that corporate citizenship behavior (Love & Singh, 2011), strong mission statements that indicate benefit to society (Henderson, 2013; Joyce, 2003), contribution to a good cause (Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013), and well laid out and easily accessible ethics statement (Park et al., 2015; Hoover & Pepper, 2014) are reputational factors that make an organization a *great place to work*.

Although several studies examine the factors there are a very few which put together the factors into a model that provides a framework to describe/understand the antecedents of a *great place to work*. Philipsen (2014) proposes one such model, given in Figure 2.2, based on a survey of great places initiatives taken by a few US colleges and universities. The model suggests that a great place provides excellent service through a confluence of prescribed sets of structural support, and values and behavior. However, the model is yet to be empirically validated. Moreover, the great places initiative and the proposed model focus on a service excellence outcome and not on a *great place to work*.



Figure 2.2: The Great Place Initiative (Philipsen, 2014, p. 16)

Perhaps the most comprehensive model, so far, to understand a *great place to work* is that proposed by Park et al. (2015). Please see Figure 2.3 for the model. The model draws from Herzberg's (1966) motivation-hygiene theory and proposes individual, group and organizational level factors, and suggests that the factors may be prioritized based on the perceived importance by the user. However, the empirical validation of the model is weak as the research setting is context heavy and the data analysis techniques not as rigorous. Specifically the data is gathered from college students, employees seeking career change, and job seekers in Korea. Furthermore, the data is analyzed through frequency of responses for each factor and statistical significance is not discussed. Moreover, the model is mostly prescriptive and may be difficult to generalize considering the varying ways in which different individuals associate psychological significance or respond to the same stimuli (cf. Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), and the varying ways in which the same individual makes sense of the same stimuli over a period of time (cf. Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999).

If one casts a wide net it is clear that there is a diverse set of characteristics which can be harnessed as that relating to antecedents of *great places to work*. These can be categorized as those relating to the work, to the supervisor, to the work-group, and to the organization. Within organizations the factors can be further sub-categorized as those pertaining to the structure, the culture, and the reputation. There are also a couple of models which try to represent the nuances of a *great place to work*. However, the literature is fragmented, idiosyncratic, and confounding. It covers a wide span, without a deep theoretical underpinning, limiting the generalizability and the usefulness of the suggested antecedents.

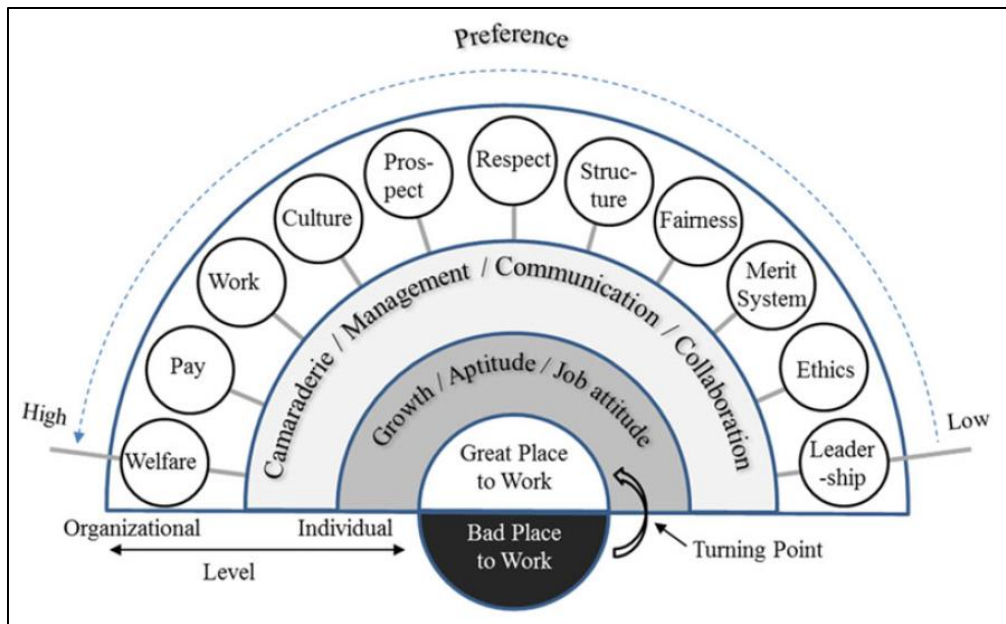


Figure 2.3: Proposed Model of a Great Place to Work (Park et al., 2015, p. 43)

Great Places to Work: The Outcomes

Studies indicate that organizations which feature in GPWI's list of Best Companies to Work For, the most commonly used proxy for *great places to work*, enjoy several positive outcomes. Such organizations have an edge when it comes to attracting talent in a competitive environment (Pok, 2015; Saini, Rai & Chaudhary, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010; Joyce, 2003), benefit from higher engagement levels, stable positive employee attitudes, and lower voluntary turnover (Dineen & Allen, 2016; Kusuma & Madasu, 2015; Fulmer, Gerhart & Scott, 2003), elicit better customer service (Butler, 2014; Simon & DeVaro, 2006; Lau, 2000), hold competitive advantage (Ballou, Godwin & Shortridge, 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003), show resilience (Carvalho & Areal, 2015; Areal & Carvalho, 2012), exhibit superior financial performance (Butler et al., 2016; Sum, 2014; Edmans 2012; Edmans 2011; Ballou et al., 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003), especially in the long run (Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003), and experience significant increases in the stock

price on being designated as a *great place to work* (Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Fulmer et al., 2003). Studies also find that organizations which are *great places to work* exhibit higher growth potential and productivity (Butler et al., 2016; Butler, 2014).

The widespread media coverage of the annual publication of GPWI's rankings offers the featured organizations opportunities to build reputation, establish distinct identity, and attract customers and investors (Pok, 2015; Love & Singh, 2011; Joyce, 2003). These organizations enjoy a higher degree of legitimacy (Zorn et al., 2014). Other organizations benchmark themselves against organizations which find place in the GPWI's rankings (Fulmer et al., 2003). Organizations also benefit just by participating in the GPWI's evaluations as they go through the rigors of participation (Areal & Carvalho, 2012).

Studies use the organizations included in the GPWI's rankings as a proxy for several variables which provides a further sense of some of the other outcomes associated with *great places to work*. For example, studies use *great places to work* as proxies for positive human resource signaling (Hannon & Milkovich, 1996), organizations with happy employees (Chan et al., 2000), employee and customer satisfaction (Neuert & Brenninger, 2014; Edmans, 2012, Edmans, 2011; Simon & DeVaro, 2006), prospective job seekers' intent to apply (Saini et al., 2014), resilience (Carvalho & Areal, 2015; Areal & Carvalho, 2012), reputation (Love & Singh, 2011), socially responsible corporation (Bernardi et al., 2006), and legitimacy (Zorn et al., 2014). Not surprisingly though, the most commonly tested outcome of a *great place to work* is the financial performance.

There is strong evidence that a *great place to work* exhibits superior financial performance (Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Chan et al., 2000). Studies have observed that such organizations exhibit

higher sales growth by as much as 8.7% (Nold III, 2012, p. 28; Lau, 2000, p. 431), asset growth to the extent of 7.0% (Lau, 2000, p. 431), return on asset growth by around 4.2% (Simon & DeVaro, 2006; Lau, 2000, p. 431), average profit margins (Neuert & Brenninger, 2014) by about 4.5% (Lau, 2000, p. 431), operating profits by 5.3% (Nold III, 2012), return on stock (Sum, 2014; Areal & Carvalho, 2012; Hannon & Milkovich, 1996) by a range between 4.3% and 28.9%, depending on the measurement (Filbeck & Preece, 2003, p. 784; Chan et al., 2000, p. 51), stock market valuation (Neuert & Brenninger, 2014; Nold III, 2012; Ballou et al., 2003), and positive earnings (Edmans, 2012, Edmans, 2011). The positive outcomes of inclusion in the GPWI's rankings are more pronounced for organizations that appear consistently in the rankings and for organizations that appear in the more recent rankings (Saini et al., 2014).

These positive outcomes of *great places to work* are explained with the help of signaling theory (Saini et al., 2014; Areal & Carvalho, 2012; Filbeck & Preece, 2003; Hannon & Milkovich, 1996), efficient market hypothesis (Hannon & Milkovich, 1996), improved quality of work life (Ballou et al., 2003; Lau, 2000) and reputation (Love & Singh, 2011), resource based view (Sum, 2014; Fulmer et al., 2003), human relations and sociological theories (Edmans, 2012, Edmans, 2011; Filbeck & Preece, 2003), and increased levels of trust (Nold III, 2012). A few studies attribute the positive outcomes of *great places to work* to higher levels of employee motivation and organizational goodwill (Areal & Carvalho, 2012; Jones, Jones & Little, 2000).

Although the organizational level outcomes show a robust positive impact of the inclusion in the GPWI's rankings we do not know as much about the individual level outcomes of such *great places to work*. The literature that examines calling (e.g., Elangovan et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin & Schwartz, 1997), man's search for meaning (Frankl, 2006), and the impact of work and positive psychological states on health (Bambra, 2011; Shanafelt, 2009; Beehr &

Newman, 1978), imply that our work experiences spill over to our lives outside of work. Although not a part of the scope of the current study, it will be interesting to examine the impact of *great places to work* on their employees' wellbeing in future studies.

The literature on the organizational level *outcomes* of *great places to work* is quite well developed. Studies have examined the outcomes with respect to several aspects of organizing such as attracting and retaining employees and investors, customer services, resilience, financial and stock performance, growth potential, reputation, identity, and legitimacy. Several studies propose and develop the theory behind the positive outcomes for *great places to work*. However, the literature on the *antecedents* of *great places to work* is not as robust.

Great Places to Work: The Missing Link

Existing studies suggest several antecedents of a *great place to work*, and identify positive impacts of being a *great place to work*. However, there are a couple of major missing links in the existing literature about the antecedents of *great places to work*, one that of a lack of generalizability, and two that of a lack of understanding of the causal core. First, the *one-size fits all* approach for the antecedents of a *great place to work* is problematic considering the differences between individuals in how they respond to the same factor or stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), the varying ways in which an individual makes sense of the same factor or stimuli over a period of time (Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999), and the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001). Second, the literature does not account for the “causal core” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255), or why the enumerated factors make an organization a *great place to work* (Park et al., 2015; Zorn et al., 2014; McCord, 2014). In other words, the applicability of the existing studies is limited because it may not work to “cherry pick” and implement factors across an organization/organization(s) without knowing whether those factors are relevant for a particular

employee situated in a particular workplace and why. In my dissertation, I address these two missing links through the fit perspective and through the mechanism of meaning *in* and *at* work.

Chapter 3: Theory Development and Hypothesis

This chapter commences with a discussion on the factor-psychological state-outcome framework used in the job characteristics model of work motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and why a similar framework could help us to understand employees' perception of a *great place to work*. Next the chapter deliberates on the factors, which is followed by a discussion about the psychological states. The chapter concludes with a proposed theoretical framework, the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*.

Factor-Psychological State-Outcome Framework

Psychological states are at the heart of the factor-psychological state-outcome framework. A psychological state is the subjective or the introspective state experienced by a person at a given time and place triggered by some underlying factors (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Thorne, 1966). The underlying factors may trigger positive psychological states such as eagerness to be engaged (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008, Hackman & Oldham, 1976) or negative ones such as anxiety (Thorne, 1966). For example, employees may be more engaged when they perceive that the organization provides adequate support towards factors which are important to them, such as, let's say, autonomy. Conversely, such employees may suffer from anxiety when their work is micro-managed by their supervisor. This psychological state of being engaged or anxious leads to other positive or negative outcomes such as high or low levels of internal motivation.

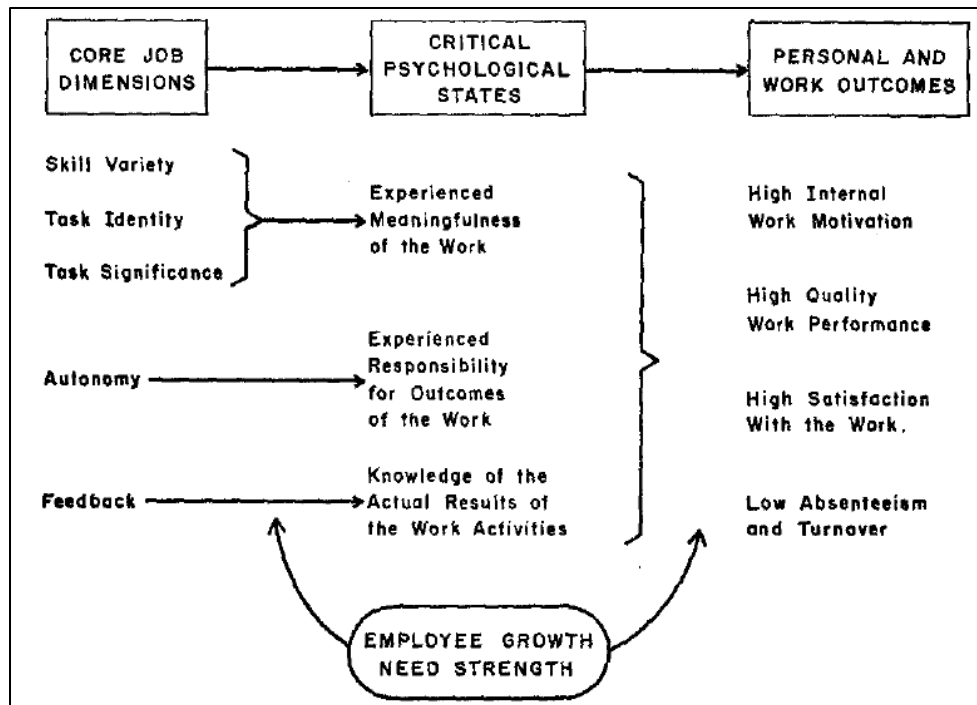


Figure 3.1: Job Characteristics Model of Work Motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 256)

For example, the factor-psychological state-outcome framework, given in Figure 3.1, was used by Hackman and Oldham (1976) to explain the job characteristics model of work motivation. They suggested that psychological states are stimulated by factors or job characteristics which result in certain outcomes. For example, the authors proposed that the high internal work motivation is the outcome of the extent to which we experience meaningfulness of the work from the underlying factors, skill variety and task identity and significance. The model emphasizes that the psychological significance we attach to underlying factors mediates or drives the outcome of those factors, that is, the psychological state is the “causal core” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255; Baron & Kenny, 1986). The model suggests that the most effective form of self-generated internal motivation occurs through positive psychological states; when persons sense that they care about, are responsible for, and are aware of the impact of their work. Finally, the model proposes that a person’s growth needs moderates the degree of psychological significance that the person

draws from the underlying factors as well as the outcomes enjoyed or suffered (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

The analysis of a phenomenon in terms of the underlying factors, the psychological significance those factors generate that then lead to outcomes is a close representation of how it works for individuals in the real life. There is stronger empirical support for the framework as well as it is more generalizable compared to that of the two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1966), which distinguishes support at work between hygiene and motivational factors but does not account for the differences in the psychological significance of the factors (Park et al., 2015; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The factor-psychological state-outcome framework is wider in scope as the core of the model is the psychological states triggered by tasks, be they routine or complex (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), unlike the activation theory (Scott, 1966), which mainly focuses on motivation vis-à-vis routine tasks. The factor-psychological state-outcome framework acknowledges the psychological ramifications of technical systems at work, which tends to be seen more as autonomous activities by the socio-technical systems theory (Pasmore, 1995; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Emery & Trist, 1969).

For the reasons stated above I use the factor-psychological state-outcome structure to probe the employees' perception of a *great place to work*. This structure provides the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* a clean and elegant framework, which acknowledges the multiplicity of factors suggested by the existing literature and provides a way to select and stack those factors using the fit perspective and explain the mechanism through meaning *in* and *at* work. In the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, the *outcome* is the *employees' perception of a great place to work*, the *psychological states* are the *meaning in work* triggered by the *factor*

person-work fit, and *meaning at work* triggered by the factors *person-supervisor*, *person-group*, and *person-organization* fits, as shown in Figure 3.2, and explained in the next sections.

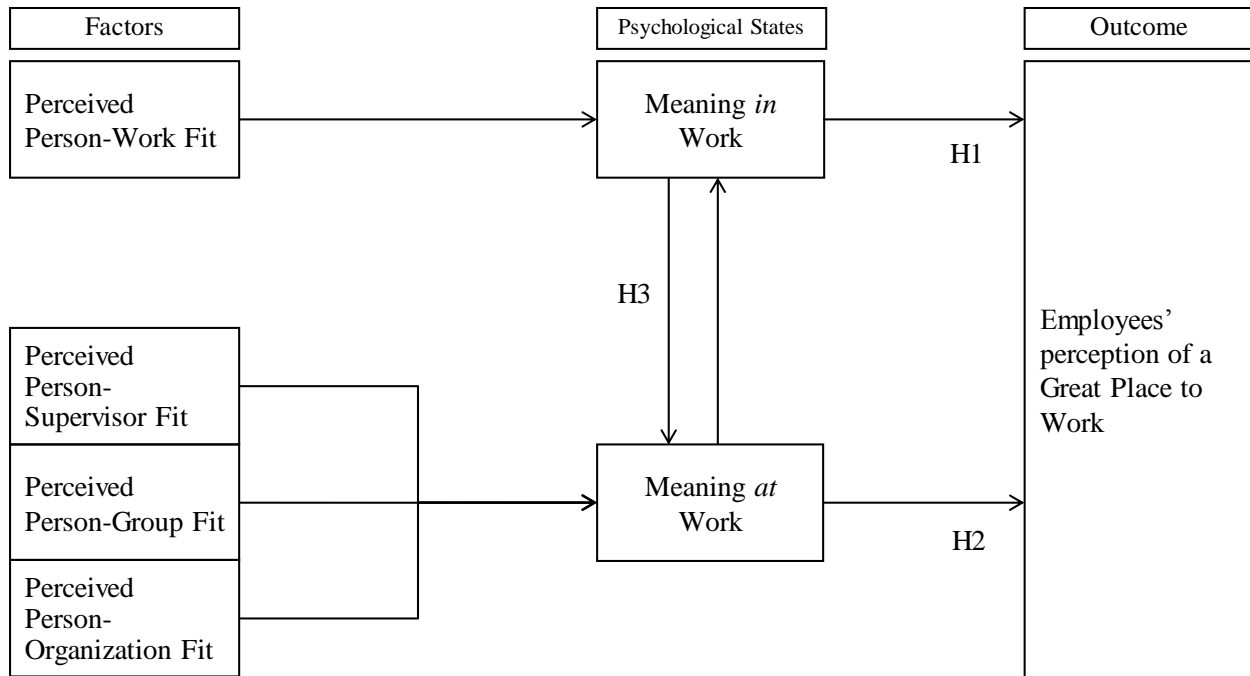


Figure 3.2: The proposed Meaning-through-Fit model of Great Places to Work. H denotes Hypothesis.

The Factors: The Fit Perspective

That good fit with one’s work and work environment may make for a great workplace was perhaps first referred to by Strong, Jr., (1943) in his treatise on vocational interests of men and women (Hansen, 2013). Fit with the work and the work environment is broadly defined as the compatibility that occurs when there is a match between the characteristics of an individual and the work/work environment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The fit can be supplementary or based on similarities, and complementary or based on a match between needs and supplies and/or that between demands and abilities (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The fit perspective emphasizes alignment, which works around the problems associated with the one-size-fits all approach in the

existing literature on the antecedents of *great places to work*. Unlike the one-size-fits all approach the fit perspective offers a flexibility to discover and narrow down on relevant antecedents based on supplementary or complementary alignment.

In addition, studies indicate that fit promotes interpersonal communication and trust, team cohesion, and increased identification with the organization (Demir, Demir & Nield, 2015; Kristof-Brown et al., 2014; Oh et al., 2014; Sun, Peng, & Pandey, 2014; Peng, Lee & Tseng, 2014; Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012; Glew, 2012; Cable & Edwards, 2004; Kristof-Brown, 2000). Fit is based on the individual's *perceptions* and it is this subjective understanding of the fit that influences the meaning which the person attaches to the fit (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Fits are further divided into four kinds according to the level of the fit: Person-work, person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fits (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In the next section I discuss each type of fit as proposed antecedents of the *great places to work*.

Person-Work Fit

Person-work fit signifies "... the relationship between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work" (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 284). While the existing literature on *great places to work* suggests that pride in the work or challenging job or job satisfaction as work level factors that make an organization a Great place to work (Butler, 2014; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010), perceived fit with the work is a pre-requisite to feel a sense of pride, or the job challenging or satisfying. In fact a meta-analysis of the fit literature shows a strong positive correlation between person-work fit, job satisfaction, and organizational attraction and commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). If individuals sense that they don't fit their work it is unlikely that they will find pride in the work, or find the work positively challenging

or satisfying, and on the contrary feelings of being a misfit may actually drive one towards burnout (Leiter & Maslach, 2003).

Person-Supervisor Fit

Person-supervisor fit is defined by the compatibility in the dyadic relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate (Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Studies that examine Best Companies to Work for, an often used proxy for *great places to work*, suggest that factors such as visionary, authentic, inspiring and/or servant leaders make an organization a *great place to work* (Philipsen, 2014; Love & Singh, 2011; Henderson, 2011; McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 2010; van Marrewijk, 2004). That a supervisor needs to be a visionary, authentic and inspiring depends on whether the follower considers these characteristics significant, and only then would these qualities be important for a *great place to work*. The key point here is that *what kind of supervisor* contributes to making an organization a *great place to work* varies from individual to individual. Thus person-supervisor fit is the deeper underlying necessity of a *great place to work*. The meta-analysis of the fit literature shows that person-supervisor fit is strongly correlated to satisfaction with the supervisor, and the quality of leader member exchange (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Recent studies also find evidence that higher levels of person-supervisor fit made the relationship between leaders' moral competence and employees' psychological empowerment stronger (Kim & Kim, 2013) and that person-supervisor fit is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior (Jing & Juan-juan, 2010).

Person-Group Fit

Person-group fit signifies the compatibility of values, personalities and abilities between individuals and their work groups (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). A work group could consist of two or more persons bound by a common activity, identity or goal

(Alderfer, 1977). Existing studies indicate that camaraderie and trust are the key factors in a work group that make an organization a *great place to work* (Butler, 2014; Burchell & Robin, 2010). Perceived person-group fit is an important element of camaraderie and trust. The social comparison (Festinger, 1954), the balanced state (Heider, 1958), and the similarity-attraction (Byrne, 1971) theories suggest that higher levels of perceived person-group fit provides us with a reassuring environment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, de Pater, Kristof-Brown & Johnson, 2004), which would certainly contribute to camaraderie and trust.

A meta-analysis of person-group fit studies show a moderate positive correlation with organizational commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). There is also evidence that values-, personality- and knowledge-skills-abilities based person-group fit is positively associated with team commitment, voice behaviors and knowledge sharing, respectively (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012), and that values- and abilities-based perceived person-group fit is positively related to team cohesion, efficacy and performance (Kristof-Brown, Seong, Degeest, Park & Hong, 2014). Such favorable outcomes of person-group fit contribute to the work environment. Thus person-group fit is another pillar for a *great place to work*.

Person-Organization Fit

Person-organization fit is defined as "... the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both" (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4-5). It is intuitive that the underlying person-organization fit will indicate the extent of buy-in in to and active engagement with the organization's structure, culture and reputation, which the existing studies that examine *great places to work* suggest as important. Such studies propose that factors pertaining to organizational structure such as compensation and career development opportunities (Park et al., 2015; Mencl &

Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014; Love & Singh, 2011; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Joyce, 2003), organizational culture such as trusting environment (Park et al., 2015; Philipsen, 2014; Butler, 2014; Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013; Burchell & Robin, 2010), and organizational reputation such as corporate citizenship behavior (Love & Singh, 2011) make an organization a *great place to work*. A meta-analysis of the person-organization fit literature shows that the fit has a strong positive correlation with organizational satisfaction and commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). There is also some evidence that perceived person-organizational fit is positively associated with the person's willingness to recommend the organization (Tepeci & Bartlett, 2002), a typical characteristic of a *great place to work*.

In the previous section I argue that the different kinds of fits are a precursor to the antecedents of *great places to work* as suggested by the current literature. In fact, the fit perspective offers an alternate approach to assessing when organizations are perceived as *great places to work*, avoiding the pitfalls of the one-size fits all approach, which is problematic considering the differences between individuals in how they associate psychological significance or respond to the same factor or stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), and the varying ways in which an individual makes sense of the same factor or stimuli over a period of time (Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999), and the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001). The fit perspective subsumes this dynamism and instead offers a matching approach.

The Fit Clusters

The four fits discussed above can be aggregated into two clusters. Person-work fit operates differently as compared to the person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits. The *person-work fit* reflects more on the characteristics of the person vis-à-vis work, i.e., it is *intrapersonal*, while the *person-supervisor*, the *person-group* and the *person-organization fits*

reflects the interaction of the person with the work environment in the organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), i.e., these fits are more *interpersonal*. Hence, the underlying person-work fit is more likely to influence the significance of the relationship with one's work or the meaning *in* work, and the underlying person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits are more likely to influence the significance of the relationship with the work environment or the meaning *at* work.

In the previous section I argued that fit with the work, the supervisor, the work group and the organization is a basic requirement for the employees' to perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*. These intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships play important roles in making the work and the work environment significant (Grant 2007; Barry & Crant, 2000). This significance is described by meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work. Other studies show similar role played by meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, in that these mediate the relationship between job enrichment, task significance, task identity, autonomy, feedback and skill variety, and work engagement (Schnell, Höge & Pollet, 2013; May, Gilson & Harter, 2004). In the following section I elaborate on meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work.

The Psychological States: Meaning in and Meaning at Work

The meaning making in the context of work signifies a psychological state created by the subjective interpretation of a "deeper purpose" (Wrzesniewski, 2003, p. 298) that we think our work serves, and that the environment where the work is situated serves (Ariely, Kamenica & Prelec, 2008). This meaning is experienced from the subjective sense that we make of the significance of our work and our work environment (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). We construct the meaning in our mind from the way we make sense of, or accord worth to or relate to, or connect with our work and its environment (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In

other words, the meaning making is not from the nature of the work or the work environment but from the perceived relationship with the work and the work environment (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Baumeister & Vohs, 2002). The meaning making may be positive, negative or neutral (Rosso, Dekas, Wrzesniewski, 2010). A positive meaning making indicates a sense of serving a greater cause, making a positive difference, fulfilment, authenticity and connectedness (Chalofsky, 2010; Rosso et al., 2010; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Herman & Gioia, 2000).

In the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* I suggest that the degree of positive meaning that employees accord to their work and to their work environment, based on the fit with the work and the work environment, indicates the degree to which employees perceive an organization a *great place to work*. In other words, I suggest that the psychological states of positive meaning *in* and *at* work, discussed hereinafter, that employees experience, mediates the relationship between the perceived fit with work, supervisor, work-group, and organization, and their perceived *great place to work*. In the next sections I distinguish between meaning making from the relationship with the work itself (meaning *in* work) and that from the relationship with the work environment (meaning *at* work). *The focus here is on the meaning making by a person based on the significance of the relationship to the person*. In other words, the focus is not on the meaning of work or the work environment per se, or whether the work or the work environment is considered meaningful by the organization or by society. The same work and the same work environment may be meaningful for some but may not be so for others (Rosso et al., 2010).

Meaning in Work

It is a psychological state derived “from the intrinsic qualities of the work itself, the goals, the values, and the beliefs that the work is thought to serve” and pertains to the role or “what am I doing?” and *not* from “where that work is done” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). It is the

significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw intrinsically from the relationship with our work (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Positive meaning *in* work is derived from the relationship with our work that generates feelings of making a positive difference, fulfilment, authenticity, and connectedness through the perceived alignment of our purpose, values, self-efficacy, and self-worth with the work (Chalofsky, 2010; Rosso et al., 2010; Baumeister, 1991). Alignment with purpose signifies being able to relate to the work in terms of one's present and future goals (Markow & Klenke, 2005; Baumeister, 1991). Alignment with value denotes that the work is consistent with what one strongly believes as right (Markow & Klenke, 2005; Baumeister, 1991). Self-efficacy reflects our perceptions about to what extent we are in control over the outcomes of our actions (Markow & Klenke, 2005; Bandura, 1999). Self-worth denotes our sense that our actions are contributing to a greater good (Markow & Klenke, 2005; Baumeister, 1991). Finding a higher degree of positive meaning *in* work signifies that the relationship with our work gives us a sense of better alignment with our purpose, values, self-efficacy, and self-worth. Thus, the source of meaning *in* work is predominantly the self.

Meaning at Work

It is a psychological state derived from “the organizational community within which the work is embedded” and pertains to membership or “where do I belong?” and *not* from “what one does” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). It is the significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw extrinsically, from the relationship with our work environment (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Meaning *at* work is sensed from the relationship with our work environment that generates feelings of making a difference, fulfilment, authenticity, and connectedness (Chalofsky, 2010; Chalofsky, 2003; Wrzesniewski, 2003). Our work is usually situated in an organization wherein we cultivate relationships with our supervisor, co-workers, and

other stakeholders. These relationships are bound by the structure, the culture, and the reputation of the organization (Chalofsky, 2010). Within the myriad permutations and combinations of relationships at the workplace, being able to be authentic in our dealings with and feel connected to our supervisor, group and other members, the structure, the culture, and the reputation of the organization helps us to sense a positive meaning *at work* (Rosso et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski, Dutton & Debebe, 2003). Studies suggest that interpersonal relationships play an important role in making work significant (Grant 2007; Barry & Crant, 2000). Thus, the source of meaning *at work* is predominantly external to the self, and it is co-created along with others.

The Link between Meaning in Work, Meaning at Work, and the Fit Perspective

The extent to which we find positive meaning *in work* and meaning *at work* depend on the relationship with our work that we choose to do and that with the organization in which we choose to work (Chalofsky, 2010). If the relationship with our work is perceived to be aligned with our purpose, values, self-efficacy, and self-worth it is likely that we will find higher degrees of positive meaning *in work* (Chalofsky, 2010; Rosso et al., 2010; Baumeister, 1991). There is some evidence that if person-work fit is encouraged through job crafting the incumbents enjoy more positive meaning *in work* (Tims, Derks & Bakker, 2016). The nature of fit with our work is more intrapersonal and ties into meaning *in work*, the source of which is predominantly the self.

If the relationship with our work environment allows us to feel fulfilled or feel that we are making a difference, or that we are able to be authentic and connected, it is likely that we will find higher degrees of positive meaning *at work* (Chalofsky, 2010; Chalofsky, 2003; Wrzesniewski, 2003). The nature of the fits with our supervisor, co-workers, and organization are more interpersonal and ties into meaning *at work*, the source of which is also heavily influenced by factors external to the self. Thus our perceived fits with our work, our supervisor, our work-groups,

and the organization play a critical role in finding meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work (Schnell et al., 2013; Chalofsky, 2010). While prior literature offers other lenses for meaning *in* and *at* work (e.g., Chalofsky, 2003; Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009) the fit perspective is a broader and a more practical approach.

That a good fit will lead to meaning *in* and *at* work is also grounded in identity, and social identity theories (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Identity theory suggests that higher person-work fit will align our work more with our identity or our self-cognition, which increases the chances of finding meaning *in* work (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Social identity theory suggests that social structures affect one's identity and in turn influence our sense of meaning *at* work based on the congruence of our work environment with our identity (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Stryker & Berke, 2000; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This claim is further supported by the social information processing theory which suggests that higher levels of congruence signifies that the social cues are more likely to be consistent with that of the person's and lead to co-creation and/or reinforcement of meaning (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), the balanced state theory (Heider, 1958), and the similarity-attraction theory (Byrne, 1971), also suggest that a sense of fit with our supervisor, work-group and organization provides us with a reassuring environment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, de Pater, Kristof-Brown & Johnson, 2004). In other words, higher degrees of positive meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work indicate that the work role and the environment are more aligned with our identity, which in turn is enabled by the underlying fit with our work, our supervisor, our work-group, and our organization (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, p. 313; Kahn, 2007).

The Link between Meaning in Work, Meaning at Work, and Great Places to Work

I propose that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255) behind employees’ perceptions of a *great place to work*. This assertion is based on the wide significance of meaning *in* and *at* work in our lives (Frankl, 2006). Motivational theorists and psychologists suggest that individuals actively seek positive meaning *in* and *at* work (Schnell et al., 2013; Höge & Pollet, 2013; Scroggins, 2008), which then is a source of motivation (Chalofsky, 2010; Rosso et al., 2010; Chalofsky, 2003) for career development (Rosso et al., 2010; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Dobrow, 2006), identification with the organization (Rosso et al., 2010; Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006), job satisfaction (Rosso et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997), empowerment (Rosso et al., 2010; Spreitzer, 1996), existential fulfilment (Kusuma & Madasu, 2015; Tomic & Tomic, 2011), engagement (Rosso et al., 2010; May et al., 2004), and proactive work behavior (Rosso et al., 2010; Berg, Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2010; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). That meaning *in* and *at* work is the causal core of a *great place to work* is also alluded to in the two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1966), which distinguishes support at work between motivational and hygiene factors. This distinction and the deliberation broadly indicates the significance of our relationship with our work (meaning *in* work) and that with our work environment (meaning *at* work), respectively.

Being able to sense meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are positive psychological states which also have positive influence on physical health (Edwards & Cooper, 1988). Studies indicate that meaning *in* work helps to alleviate stress (Rosso et al., 2010; Elangovan et al., 2010), and prevents burnout (e.g., Shanafelt, 2009). Conversely, the literature observes that a lack of meaning *in* and *at* work leads to alienation, cynicism, frustration, powerlessness, dissatisfaction, disengagement, low self-esteem, doubting the worth of the work, and intention to quit (Steenkamp

& Basson, 2013; Scroggins, 2008; Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Holbeche & Springett, 2004; Chalofsky, 2003; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Cummings and Manring, 1977). All these indicate that meaning *in* and *at* work have outcomes which are important, and shape our feelings toward our workplace, and play a significant role in determining whether we would consider an organization a *great place to work*. Similar critical role have been observed in other studies where meaning *in* and *at* work is shown to mediate the relationship between job enrichment, task significance, task identity, autonomy, feedback and skill variety, and work engagement (Schnell et al., 2013; May et al., 2004). There is also some evidence that finding positive meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work is a top priority for the employees of *great places to work* (WorkplaceDynamics, 2015) and generally at work (Schnell, Höge & Pollet, 2013; Scroggins, 2008).

Further, the characteristics of the main aspects of meaning *in* work and *at* work, the sense that we are *making a difference, fulfilment, authenticity* and *connectedness*, suggest that each are potentially positive states, and the presence of which are likely to trigger perceptions of a *great place to work*. For example, the *altruistic* part of human nature or “acting with the goal of benefiting another” (Piliavin & Charng, 1990, p. 27), or the *prosocial intent* in us (Grant, 2007), are reasons why work and work environments those make a difference, or serve a greater cause are likely to be rated as a *great place to work*. Altruism also shows a strong correlation with well-being, happiness, health, and life span (Post, 2005). *Fulfilment* is found to be another critical ingredient of well-being (Gröpel & Kuhl, 2009). Studies also suggest a positive correlation between *authenticity* or the ability to be oneself and psychological well-being, satisfaction with life, positive self-acceptance, self-esteem, autonomy, happiness, environmental mastery, personal growth, and gratitude (e.g., Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Toor, & Ofori, 2009; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008), and lower levels of anxiety, depression, and perceived stress (e.g.,

Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne & Ilardi, 1997). Moreover, there is evidence that organizational *connectedness* or the levels of “emotional connection with other workers, with service recipients and with aspects of the task and the organization’s values” (p. 305), indicates turnover intentions, happiness and well-being (Huynh, Xanthopoulou & Winefield, 2014).

The Meaning-through-Fit Model of a Great Place to Work

Having made a case for the links between meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and the different kinds of fits, and that between meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and employees’ perception of a *great place to work*, I now bring the two together to propose the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. In the link between meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and the different types of fits, I posit that meaning *in* work depends on the underlying person-work fit and that meaning *at* work depends on the underlying person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits. In the link between meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and employees’ perception of a *great place to work*, I posit that meaning *in* and *at* work drives the employees’ perception of a *great place to work*. Integrating these two positions I propose that the employees’ perception of *great places to work* is driven by the fits with the work and that with the work environment (supervisor, group and organization), mediated by the meaning that such fit creates/reinforces. In other words, if employees perceive a fit with their work which provides them meaning *in* work, and perceive fits with their supervisor, co-workers, and organization which provides them meaning *at* work that is when they will perceive their organization to be a *great place to work*. Thus I hypothesize the following.

Hypothesis 1: Employees’ perceived person-work fit is positively related with the employees’ perception of a great place to work, and this relationship is mediated by meaning in work.

Hypothesis 2: Employees' perceived person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fit are positively related with the employees' perception of a great place to work, and this relationship is mediated by meaning at work.

Meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work may not be mutually exclusive. It is highly likely that we sense different degrees of positive meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, and a high degree of meaning *in* work may rub off on the meaning *at* work or vice versa. If we find that the relationship with our work stimulates a strong positive meaning it is likely that minor differences with our supervisor or group or organization may not appear to be significant. The fulfilment from the work may overshadow irritants present in the work environment. It may be so that the person finds the work highly meaningful so as to make the work environment of no consequence. For example, academics may find research and/or teaching so meaningful that they may not attach significance to the fact that the University pay is lower than that one could earn in business. However, if the work is meaningless even small differences with our supervisor, group, or organization may appear to be looming large.

On the other hand, in case we find meaningful relationships with our supervisor, work group, and the organization's structure, culture and reputation or meaning *at* work it is more likely that we may overlook minor struggles with meaning *in* work than in a situation where our relationship with our supervisor, work group is stressful and we think poorly of our organization. For example, persons deployed on factory shop floors with repetitive tasks may not find meaning *in* work but the meaning *at* work from the connection with colleagues and the organizational culture may have a halo effect on meaning *in* work.

The dirty work literature suggests that stronger identification with the work group helps to overcome social stigmas sometimes associated with the work (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). Social stigma does not in itself equate to low meaning *in* work, but if it does for some, a high meaning *at* work may compensate the low meaning *in* work. In this regard, it is commonplace among the “oil field trash,” (p. ix) to draw heavily on the camaraderie or on financial compensation (Lynch, 1987). In other words, meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work may support each other. I therefore hypothesize the following.

Hypothesis 3: Meaning in work and meaning at work are positively related to each other.

Please see Figure 3.2 for the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, representing the above three hypotheses. This *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* proposes that employees derive positive meaning *in* work from higher levels of perceived person-work fit and derive positive meaning *at* work from higher levels of perceived person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fit, and this positive meaning *in* and *at* work is the *causal core* that drives the perception of a *great place to work* (Figure 3.2, H1 and H2). The model also proposes that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work reinforce each other (Figure 3.2, H3).

Chapter 4: Research Design

In this chapter, I describe the approach adopted and the methodologies used to test the three proposed hypotheses, and, in effect, to empirically validate the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. The chapter commences with an overview of the research design followed by the descriptions of the designs of each of the three studies conducted. These research designs formed the basis on which, prior to embarking on the data gathering for Study 1, I obtained the approval of the Human Ethics Review Board for all the three studies.

Research Design Overview

I used a mixed methods approach to test the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. The mixed methods approach provides a more pragmatic way to examine a research question instead of using just qualitative or just quantitative techniques (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). A pragmatic approach enriches knowledge construction as it recognizes the co-existence of the physical world and the social and the psychological world (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The quantitative techniques help to measure the physical, the social, and the psychological concepts while the qualitative techniques help to gain a deeper understanding on how the physical, the social, and the psychological concepts are connected with each other (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). In my dissertation, the qualitative studies (Study 1 and Study 3) helped me to understand how to measure the variables in the proposed model and the dynamics of the relationship between the variables, while the quantitative methods (Study 2) helped me to objectively measure the variables and the relationship between the variables. The persons invited to participate in each of the three studies were those currently working in organizations and could provide data based on more recent recollection of memory rather than on a reconstructed past. This was done to avoid errors in reconstruction (Loftus

& Palmer, 1974). Please see Table 4.1 for a snapshot of the research design and the following sections for a description of the design of each of the three studies.

Table 4.1: A snapshot of the research design

<p>1. Study 1 (Qualitative): Semi-structured interviews (to obtain prima facie validity for the model and to obtain data to develop the scales measuring the seven critical variables)</p> <p>2. Study 2 (Quantitative):</p> <p>2.1 Pilot Survey 1 (for scale development and model testing)</p> <p>2.2 Pilot Survey 2 (for scale development and model testing)</p> <p>2.3 The Main Survey (for model testing) – 97 items</p> <p>Wave 1: Mainly the predictor variables (the fits) – 39 items</p> <p>Wave 2: Mainly the mediator (Meaning <i>in</i> and <i>at</i> work) and the control variables, and additional variables – 27 items</p> <p>Wave 3: Mainly the outcome variable (employees' perception of a Great Place to Work) and additional variables – 31 items</p> <p>2.4 Scenario Analysis (for robustness check)</p> <p>3. Study 3 (Qualitative): Focused in-depth interviews (to understand the results of Study 2)</p>

Study 1: Face Validity of the Proposed Model and Development of Scales

Study 1 had two main objectives: First, to obtain prima facie validity for the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, and second, to gain a better understanding on how to measure the variables in the model. Although the proposed hypotheses and the model were underpinned by theory and embedded in literature Study 1 was conceived in order to see how the proposed model resonated with people currently working in organizations, and what they had to say about the dynamics between the variables in the proposed model. Study 1 was also conceived in order to gather data on how to measure the seven main variables in the model (employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-group fit, and person-organization fit). There were no rigorously tested

scales to measure employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *at work*, and person-group fit. Moreover, the existing scales for the other four critical variables (meaning *in work*, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-organization fit) needed some refinement, as discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Keeping in mind the objectives of Study 1, I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with a diverse set of persons, currently working in organizations, and in a variety of roles and industries. The semi-structured interviews included several open-ended questions, especially those related to the seven critical variables, for which I needed to develop/refine the scales in preparation for Study 2. In the semi-structured interviews, the open-ended questions allowed me to capture a wider spectrum of the understanding of a variable/construct (Arnon & Reichel, 2009) and structured questions allow to keep the response focused, which is useful especially when the questions pertain to relationship between variables. Please see Appendix 3 for a list of the main questions that were used to guide the semi-structured interviews. Given that the data was necessary to redraft/compose items for the scales to measure the seven critical variables in Study 2, I planned to transcribe and code the interview responses.

Study 2: Testing the Proposed Model

The objective of Study 2 was to empirically test the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. As mentioned earlier, there were no rigorously tested scales to measure three of the seven main variables in the proposed model, namely, employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *at work*, and person-group fit; and the existing scales for the other four main variables (meaning *in work*, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-organization fit) needed some refinement (please see Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion). Hence, the design of Study 2 was heavily influenced by the need to develop and refine the scales. Study 2 was designed

in the spirit of the recommendations made by Wright, Quick, Hannah and Blake Hargrove (2017) with regard to the best practices for scale construction, by Sekaran's (2006) treatise on data collection methods, and by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003) work on mitigating common methods variance.

In Study 2, I decided to conduct a first Pilot Survey, conduct a second Pilot Survey with a different set of participants, then conduct the Main Survey, and finally corroborate the results of the Main Survey with a Scenario Analysis. The scale items in the first Pilot Survey were to be based on the qualitative data from Study 1, the definitions of each of the variables, and the scale items in the existing literature. The scales for the Main Survey and the Scenario analysis were to be based on the analyses of the two Pilot Surveys, and reviews by the Dissertation Committee Members and other experts on scale design. This mechanism of building up the scales for the seven critical variables is given in Appendices 4 to 11.

The Main Survey was to be conducted in three waves with an interval of about two weeks between each wave. The temporal intervals were proposed so as to reduce the chances of common methods bias through common rater effects (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The common rater effects may otherwise bias the responses due to "consistency motifs," "implicit theories" or "illusory correlations," and "social desirability" (p. 881), and through artificial covariance which may not be as a result of the content of the constructs (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The interval between each phase was restricted to about two weeks to reduce the extent of participants' attrition (De Bock & Van Kenhove, 2010; Avey, Luthans, Smith & Palmer, 2010). In the first wave, I measure the main predictor variables and included a "complete the sentence task," which also doubled up as a check on the quality of the participants. In the second wave, I measure the mediator and the control

variables, and in the third wave, I measure the outcome and a few additional variables. Please see Table 4.2 for the list of variables included in the Main Survey.

Table 4.2: List of variables

Wave	Variable type	Variable label	Number of variables	Number of items
1	Demographic	Industry type, organization type, organization size, length of service, full/part-time, and paid/voluntary work	6	6
1	Outcome	Perception of current organization as a <i>great place to work</i>	1	1
1	Task	I think an organization is a <i>great place to work</i> when ... (complete the sentence)	-	-
1	Predictors	Person-work fit, person-supervisor-fit, person-group fit, and person-organization fit	4	28
1	Additional	Fit salience	1	4
Sub-total for Wave 1			12	39
2	Demographic	Function type	1	1
2	Mediators	Meaning <i>in</i> work, and meaning <i>at</i> work	2	12
2	Controls	Work salience, alternate job availability, financial stability, gender, educational level, age group	6	6
2	Additional	Job engagement and organizational citizenship behavior - individual (scales adopted from Saks, 2006)	2	8
Sub-total for Wave 2			11	27
3	Demographic	Level in the organization, country where lived the longest, Bi-cultural	3	3
3	Outcome	Perception of a <i>great place to work</i>	1	6
3	Additional	Perception of a <i>great place to work</i> (additional items), organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior – organization (scales adopted from Saks, 2006), job satisfaction (scale adopted from Rusbult & Farrell, 1983)	3	22
Sub-total for Wave 3			7	31
Total			30	97

The variables in the proposed *meaning-through-fit model* represent the employees' *perception of a great place to work* based on the experienced meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work from the *perceived* fit with our work, supervisor, group, and organization. Hence, the self-reported surveys were designed to measure the “reality” we create based on our *perceptions* of the objective reality (van Vuuren, Veldkamp, de Jong, & Seydel, 2007; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The emphasis is not on the “accuracy” of the perceptions but the “realities” based on the sense making through our perceptions (Weick et al., 2005). Although the perceptions are based on individual biases (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) it is this perceived understanding which forms the basis of our behavior (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Amazon's Mechanical Turk's (MTurk) Human Intelligence Task (HIT) workers were invited to participate in the three-wave survey. MTurk's HIT workers have gained increasing legitimacy as research participants, the data gathered from them proving to be at least as good as or better than those from other participants (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016; Casler, Bickel & Hackett, 2013). Moreover, studies that used MTurk's HIT workers as research participants have been published in top tier management journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal* and the *Administrative Science Quarterly Journal* (e.g., Ramarajan, Rothbard & Wilk, 2017; Schilke, 2017; Banks et al., 2016; Berg, 2016; Casciaro, Gino & Kouchaki, 2014). Those MTurk's HIT workers were invited who had a track record of at least 98% approval of the HITs already completed and those who were currently employed in an organization.

I used the seven-point Likert scale in the survey instruments, with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Although some studies suggest that validity and reliability are independent of the number of items used in the Likert scale (e.g., Matell & Jacoby, 1971) other studies indicate that the seven-point Likert scale is likely to increase the reliability of the

measurement over the over the five-point Likert scale (e.g., Allen & Seaman, 2007). In the Pilot Surveys, I used negatively worded or reverse coded items in each of the measures to strengthen the validity of the survey as suggested by Ritsher, Otilingam and Grajales, (2003). However, in the data analysis of the first and the second Pilot Surveys, the negatively worded items repeatedly showed up as the ones with the weakest factor loading. Hence, negatively worded items were not used in the Main Survey. This is consistent with more recent observations on scale construction (please see Wright et al., 2017). All the surveys (the two Pilot Surveys, the three-wave Main Survey, and the Scenario Analysis, described below) were hosted on FluidSurveys, the official survey support providers to our university. Please see Appendix 12 for the full instrument used in the three-wave Main Survey.

Most of the variables under study were latent or unobserved variables and they were not directly measured (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2013). Hence for the data analysis, apart from multiple regression, the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was adopted. First, the representation of the latent variables by the underlying manifest or observed variables, measured by the items in each of the scales, were examined through correlations, CFA, composite reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and convergent and discriminant validity checks (Shook, Ketchen, Hult & Kacmar, 2004; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Churchill Jr., 1979). Second, the proposed relationship between the latent variables and/or measured variables, expressed above through the series of multiple regression, were examined SEM. SEM allows for simultaneous testing of two or more relationships between latent variables and/or measured variables and provides several ways to measure model fit (Shook et al., 2004; Hu & Bentler, 1995; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The SEM and the multiple regression were estimated using Stata.

The results from the above, discussed in Chapter 6, were corroborated through a Scenario Analysis. Scenarios are “coherent and plausible stories” which are “neither predictions nor forecasts” but a “systematic way of thinking about the future” (Swart, Raskin & Robinson, 2004, p. 139). They are “hypothetical sequences of events constructed with the purpose of focusing attention on causal processes and decision points” (Kahn & Weiner, 1967, p. 6). For the purposes of corroborating the finding from the Main Survey, one-paged stories were crafted which portrayed scenarios of high person-work fit, and high person-supervisor, high person-group, and high person-organization fits (Scenario 1); high person-work fit and low person-supervisor, low person-group, and low person-organization fits (Scenario 2); low person-work fit and high person-supervisor, high person-group, and high person-organization fits (Scenario 3); and low person-work fit and low person-supervisor, low person-group, and low person-organization fits (Scenario 4). I narrowed down on these four scenarios based on the two fit clusters, the first one being person-work fit and the second one being person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits, as discussed in Chapter three. I initially considered creating scenarios for the variations in each of the fits in the second cluster. However, I dropped the idea given that a lot of resources were needed to gather sufficient data for a meaningful analysis, and given that assessing the salience of each of the fits in the second cluster was not a priority in this study.

The emphasis in each of the scenario descriptions was composed based on the findings from Study 1, and the Pilot and the Main Surveys in Study 2. For example, the emphasis on high and low person-work fit was described by manipulating the protagonist’s position along the identified dimensions of person-work fit, that is, the person’s match with regard to knowledge, skills, abilities, interests and personality, and the work. Each scenario description is enclosed in Appendix 13. MTurk’s HIT workers who completed all the three waves of the Main Survey were invited to

participate in the scenario analysis. The four scenarios were randomly assigned among the qualifying MTurk HIT workers. They were to read the scenario and fill out the survey, which consisted of the seven main variables of the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, using the same scales as in the Main Survey, along with a few demographic variables, that is, gender, education, age-group, and country. The data were analyzed using CFA, SEM, and multiple regression.

Study 3: Understanding the Findings

Study 3 was designed with two objectives in mind. The first objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the findings from Study 2. The proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* consists of seven main variables (person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-group fit, person-organization fit, meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and employees' perception of a *great place to work*), with each variable being multi-dimensional. For example, the variable person-work fit is measured in Study 2 with the help of five dimensions, that is, the match perceived by individuals between their interest, knowledge, skills, abilities and personality, and their work. While the data from Study 2 indicates the factor loading of each of the five dimensions or the degree to which each of the dimensions influenced the perception of person-work fit, in Study 3 the objective was to understand the different degrees to which the dimensions mattered in the relationship between the variables, such as that between person-work fit and meaning *in* work. The second objective in Study 3 was to dig deeper into counterintuitive or unexpected findings from Study 2, or findings from Study 2 which contradicted those from Study 1.

Keeping in mind the objectives of Study 3 I decided to conduct structured interviews with a diverse set of persons, currently working in organizations, and in a variety of roles and industries.

Most of the interview questions solicited the interviewees reflections on the results obtained in Study 2. Please see Appendix 14 for the list of the questions, along with their motivation, that were used to guide the structured interviews. In a push to obtain more insightful reflections on the findings of Study 2, interviewees with longer periods of work experience and occupying more senior positions were preferred.

Chapter 5: Face Validity of the Proposed Model and Development of Scales (Study 1)

In this chapter I discuss the sample, the procedure, and the results of Study 1, in which I checked the *prima facie* validity of our proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. In addition, I gathered data to develop and refine the scales that were used in Study 2 to measure the seven main variables in the proposed model: Employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-group fit, and person-organization fit. The data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using ATLAS.ti as described in the following sections.

Sample and Procedures

I invited 88 personal contacts, who were currently working in organizations, to participate in the semi-structured interview. The personal contacts were drawn from a larger list of contacts consisting of my LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp networks, and my ex-colleagues and acquaintances. After two rounds of follow-up 26 persons participated. They represented both private and public organizations (13 each), more than 10 types of industries (advertising, agriculture, banking, etc., covering 10 out of the 16 major Canadian industries, by employment, identified by Statistics Canada (2018)), 7 types of functions (administration, business development, information technology etc.), and covered both genders (females 14). The participants' ages ranged between 20 years and 75 years, and their educational background ranged from being undergraduates to being PhDs. The total interview duration was a little over 18.5 hours with the average being 43 minutes. Please see Appendix 15 for a description of the sample.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face (17) or through audio visual medium (9), such as Skype, scheduled at times and venues convenient to the interviewee. The interview questions, enclosed in Appendix 3, were on a spectrum between open ended ones and

somewhat structured ones (e.g., When do you consider an organization a *great place to work?* When do you find a task or work to be a good fit for you?) in order to gain a deeper understanding of the seven main variables. There were 11 main questions in all. All the participants, with one exception, agreed to the interview being audio recorded. I transcribed the audio recording, consolidated the transcribed responses for each question, using ATLAS.ti coded the transcription for each question, and also identified sub-themes for a couple of the questions, as described in the next section.

Results and Discussion

The data provided indications about the prima facie validity of the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. A few of the interviewees' responses to the open-ended question about *great places to work* (when do you consider an organization a *great place to work*/do you consider your current organization a *great place to work*?) could be directly mapped on to the proposed model even though the model was not shared with the interviewees. A few quotes supporting my assertions are (the "... " indicate the pauses that the interviewees took as they pondered over their responses; the details of the interviewee offering the quote is disclosed to the extent that, I think, will not compromise her/his anonymity; the responses are quoted verbatim; words in parentheses and *italics* indicate my comments/questions seeking clarifications):

"I think two things come to mind and they are kind of connected ... when I am able to do work that is meaningful to me ... and the other part of that is when I'm supported in doing that work."

- Sales Personnel, Pharmacy

"You actually find that the work you are doing is contributing to something ... I am working with adults with mental health and substance use problems ... and so I am providing support for them ... you know they have been living in the streets and so I think ... simply finding work that you think is contributing."

- Mental Health Worker, Public Sector

“The work feels meaningful.”

- Secretarial Staff, Public Sector

“The quality of the team I worked with ... the quality of the work we got to do ... (*by quality you mean?*) ... quality ... to me it’s like personally meaningful work. I think also having your work valued by society is something that’s ... for me ... it would be very fulfilling.”

- Operator, Logging Mill

“I am making a difference.”

- Two interviewees used this exact phrase: Implementation Consultant, Information Technology, and Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

A few interviewees described *bad* places to work, which also provided support to the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*:

“I think there is a lot of work ... I think a lot of retail work ... ah ... that people do are just ... they find completely meaningless.”

- Mental Health Worker, Public Sector

“I mean basically if you were working on work that’s never go anywhere ... if you are spending an awful lot of time trying to advance something that you are told is a major goal and it gets dropped for reason that doesn’t feel apparently reasonable or ... I would find that to feel kind of meaningless.”

- Secretarial Staff, Public Sector

The support for the model is stronger whence the interviewees were provided an opportunity to review/reflect, at the end of the interview, on what they said in response to the open ended

question about *great places to work* at the start of the interview. It appears that the meaning *in* and *at* work were the causal core of a *great place to work* for a few interviewees. They did not initially frame it as such but once we had a conversation about meaning *in* and *at* work these interviewees passionately articulated about the importance of those in a *great place to work*. Sample quotes are:

“I think there are lot of components but I think there is ... probably the keyword would be meaningful.”

- Secretarial Staff, Public Sector

“I did kind of touch on fit and meaningfulness right ... after talking all this I think about meaningfulness a bit more.”

- Operator, Logging Mill

“Well it comes down ... to express my mind ... it comes down to whole meaningfulness of it ... probably the motivation behind those actual individual items is the meaningfulness ... so my claim about internal heat ... my problem with that is that it is meaningless ... meaningfulness would be the key concept behind all that stuff ... yeah.”

- Technical Architect, Public Sector

“My ideal great place to work would be like the place I have been working in terms of the colleagues ... supervisors ... general sense of the organization ... but yes like I said I don't find the work terribly interesting or engaging ... and that would be ideal ... if the work is also engaging ... exciting in some way ... like I felt like I was doing something useful for people ... like teaching.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“Making a difference in the lives for people who need it the most”

- Implementation Consultant, Information Technology

In another question, the interviewees were asked how they would select between three job offers if each of the offers were similar with regard to financial rewards, commitment of time, and

other factors such as commute, etc. The interviewees stated that they would consider factors such as fit with the work, the extent of shared purpose and values, whether they would like the work, the supervisor, the people, and the culture, and whether the work was meaningful (whether they would be able to make a lasting contribution, fulfilment, and happiness). These indicated a prima facie validity for the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. Excerpts from the comments made by the interviewees are:

“Well ... it will depend on the actual work to be done ... which one I was going to be most proficient at ... useful at.”

- President, Immigration Consultancy Services

“It would be the interest in the work.”

- Technical Architect, Public Sector

“Exactly what the task is (that) I am being asked to do.”

- Teacher 1, Public Sector

“I will look at fit.”

- Implementation Consultant, Information Technology

“I need to like the work.”

- Economist, Public Sector

“The biggest thing that I have is the people that I work with ... also my supervisor ... the way he runs an organization or our department I should say ... (it) is hard to leave ... because you know in speaking with other people ... (this is) rare to find ... so that is my number one (criterion) when I look for a job.”

- Educational Consultant, Public Sector

“The type of people I would be working with.”

- Technical Architect, Public Sector

“To me it’s very important how (I) feel when interacting with other people ... if we share the same values or if you see the interaction is positive and ... fulfilling then that’s a big thing.”

- Research Analyst, Public Sector

“So even if the pay, distance and commitment are more or less the same I will try to find the work that I found the most meaningful or fulfilling.”

- Mental Health Worker, Public Sector

“I think that meaning has more weight.”

- Investment Advisor, Banking

“The meaningfulness of the work ... because once you have got your basic needs met ... I can live very cheaply and don’t need a lot of money but when you think about this is your life day by day it needs to matter ... I think ... you need to get some sort of enjoyment out of it ... otherwise what’s the point.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“If I felt like it was making a ... some sort of lasting contribution ... to the society ... then I would ... you know other things would ... be less important.”

- Residential Support Worker, Support Services

“I would work at lower paying job over a high paying job if the low paying job was more fulfilling ... in terms of the people I work with or even the job that I do ... and if I looked forward to ... I am happy to be at work then that’s more important than the pay check at the end of the day.”

- Administration Staff 3, Large and Diverse Multinational Corporation

“How would I choose ... what made me happy ... that’s all I would care about ... I don’t care about the money ... because my least priority is money ... it’s only what makes me feel best.”

- Housekeeping Assistant, Public Sector

On being asked about the connection between the person-work, person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fits, and meaning *in* and *at* work (I asked you about fit and I asked you about meaning *in* work or meaning *at* work ... do you think that these two are distinct ... if so, in what way?) there were several interesting insights. First, a match between persons’ interests and their work seems to be an important dimension of person-work fit with respect to a feeling of meaning *in* work and perceptions of a *great place to work*. This was exemplified by a couple of interviewees. One mentioned that he earlier worked at a Logging Mill, feeding wood into a cutting machine. While he was skilled at his work, and had great co-workers with whom he went out for beers, he wouldn’t rate the organization as a *great place to work* or the work as meaningful because the work was essentially boring. Another interviewee expressed similar thoughts about his erstwhile experience as a cab driver. Second, the interviewees’ indicated that the types of fits and the meaning *in* and *at* work were intricately connected, and that the fits were necessary for meaning *in* and *at* work. A few interviewees stated:

“I would see them as being very closely linked. I don’t know if I could picture the other way that you find your work terribly meaningful but you are not fitting in anymore.”

- Operator, Logging Mill

“In order for it to be meaningful to me it’s about how it fits with me.”

- Sales Personnel, Pharmacy

“I can see organizations where the work would be very meaningful but fit wouldn’t be there ... I have a really good example but it’s not me ... I have a cousin who sold his company for a lot of money and he retired and then he went to a NGO in his city, a very well-known NGO and he tried to offer his services to them on a volunteer basis and he being a retired very successful businessman didn’t fit with this youth culture that was basically driving the organization and they didn’t know where to put him and how to respond and he never heard from them.”

- Secretarial Staff, Public Sector

Third, it is clear that the interviewees made a distinction between the types of fits and meaning *in* and *at* work. They suggested that while the fits were about matching and/or getting along, the meaning *in* and *at* work were more about the contributions, about the impacts and the outcomes, and about feeling satisfied. The types of fits were more local to the organization whereas the meanings were more global and associated with the self and other stakeholders. The types of the fits were transactional while that of the meanings were transformational. Relevant quotes from interviewees in this regard are:

“Fit is more of use of knowledge at work at some level ... something knocked down can fit ... but it may not be meaningful ... meaningful is more to do with feeling satisfied.”

- Economist, Public Sector

“When I think of fit ... I think of something more like a list of qualifications and whereas meaningfulness means is this what I want to do with my life.”

- Technical Architect, Public Sector

“So fit is your relationship with the work and how much you like the work and meaningful is when your work has a more larger impact.”

- Teacher 2, Public Sector

“So fit is more ... you may relate to your place of work ... you know how you get along with others ... how you are being heard I guess ... and whereas meaningfulness is more I guess I feel I am contributing.”

- Educational Consultant, Public Sector

“Fit would be ... just if the work involved ... is a really good match for your skills ... and meaningfulness is the outcome of that work.”

- President, Immigration Consultancy Services

“I think it (fit) is organization specific and meaningfulness is more of a mandate.”

- Secretarial Staff, Public Sector

The data also indicates that most interviewees think that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are “pretty tightly coupled,” (Technical Architect, Public Sector) and a few suggested that the association is dynamic. An interviewee stated that early on in his career the work environment sustained his enthusiasm (meaning *at* work), however, later on it was the work itself that mattered more (meaning *in* work). Another interviewee pointed out that the work and the work environment

change along with which the meaning *in* work and the meaning *at* work also change. A majority of the interviewees considered that meaning *in* work was more important than meaning *at* work, and attributed meaning *in* work to be the main reason for them to continue with their current job.

Please see appendices 16 to 35 for the coding of the interviewees' responses to each of the 11 main questions. The coding of the responses to the open-ended questions on perceptions of *great place to work* and *person-organization fit* were further clustered into sub-themes. The codes for the perceptions of *great place to work* were clustered into 2 sub-themes, one with respect to relationship with one's work, and the other with respect to the relationship with one's work environment, which consisted of the supervisor, the co-workers, and the organizational culture, structure, purpose and reputation. The codes for *person-organization fit* were clustered into 4 sub-themes around organizational culture, structure, purpose, and reputation. The codes provide important insights into the key constituents of each of the seven main variables in the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. Please see Table 5.1 for a snapshot of the top 5 codes mapped on the interviewees' responses describing each of the seven main variables. The codes identified as the descriptions of person-group fit, meaning *at* work, and employees' perceptions of a *great place to work* were particularly important given the paucity of scales to measure these variables.

Table 5.1: The Top Five Codes for Each of the Seven Main Variables

Rank	1. Person-work Fit	2. Person-supervisor Fit	3. Person-group Fit	4. Person-organization Fit (culture, structure, purpose and reputation)	5. Meaning <i>in</i> Work	6. Meaning <i>at</i> Work	7a. Employees' perception of a Great Place to Work (In relation to one's work)	7b. Employees' perception of a Great Place to Work (In relation to one's work environment)
1	Uses my knowledge; Utilizes and/or stretches skills (9)	Provides autonomy/broad directions/not a micro-manager (17)	Respectful of each other (10)	Ethical (8)	Impactful/important /making a positive impact/making a difference (14)	People are supportive/ collaborative/ team work (10)	The work is meaningful/makes a difference/ work is useful/valued by society (14)	Adequate financial rewards (10)
2	Ability to do the work (7)	Matching values and world views pertaining to work (7)	Get along (9)	Reputation acceptable to self (6)	Helping people/ benefitting society (11)	Allows one to be authentic (7)	Being able to be productive (4)	Autonomy; Growth and opportunities to grow (9)
3	Interesting work (6)	Broadly matching values and world views pertaining to work (5)	Internally motivated co-workers (8)	Purposeful; Flat structure (5)	Contributing to the desired outcome (4)	People are approachable (5)	The work provides fulfilment (4)	Good relationships with co-workers (8)
4	Learning and opportunities to learn; challenging work; enjoyable work (4)	Authentic; Caring; Experienced; Respectful (4)	Honesty (6)	Openness; Fit with culture; Open to change; Flexible; Learning and opportunities to learn; Clarity of purpose; Well reputed (4)	Allowed to be authentic; Fulfilment; Financial reward (3)	Feel connected with the people; Family type environment (3)	The work is challenging (2)	Respectful work environment (7)
5	Fit with personality (3)	Inclusive; Flexible; Good communicator; Fair; Enabler; Trustworthy (3)	Complement each other, Openness, Collaborative, Balanced between fun and work (5)	Respectful; Values its people; Clarity of structure; Serves a greater cause; Reputation is important (3)	Healing; Depends on the industry (e.g., financial reward maybe more important in the wealth management/oil and gas industries); Task variety; Provides identity; Making progress; Purpose of the work is clear (2)	Benefitting society; Effective leadership; Getting along; Benefitting the customers; Learning and opportunities to learn; Valued and heard; Encourages self-actualization; Safe environment (2)	Feeling effective (2)	Organizational support; Valued and heard; Good work environment; Learning and opportunities to learn (6)

Figures in parenthesis indicate the count of each code

Chapter 6: Testing the Proposed Model (Study 2)

In this chapter I discuss the procedure, the sample, and the results of Study 2, which consisted of testing the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* using quantitative techniques. At first I describe the procedure adopted to develop and refine the scale items of the seven main variables (employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-group fit, and person-organization fit) with the help of the data gathered in Study 1, 2 Pilot Surveys, and reviews of the scale items. Next I deliberate on the three-wave Main Survey through which I gathered quantitative data pertaining to the seven main variables, and other control and additional variables listed in Table 4.2. Thereafter I describe the results of the data analysis using CFA, SEM and multiple regressions with the help of Stata. Finally, I discuss the Scenario Analysis conducted to check the robustness of the findings of the three-wave Main Survey.

Procedures and Samples

The first step in Study 2 was to develop and refine the seven main variables in the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. A literature search revealed that there were no rigorously tested scales to measure three of the seven main variables in the proposed model, namely, employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *at* work, and person-group fit. Moreover, the existing scales for the other four main variables (meaning *in* work, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-organization fit) needed some refinement, discussed in the Measurement section. The procedure followed to develop and refine the scales were guided by the recommendations of Wright et al. (2017) with respect to best practices for scale construction. I drafted a set of scale items based on the definitions of the seven main variables, the five top themes that emerged for each of the seven main variables out of Study 1, and the scale items of the

same/similar variables in the existing literature. After eleven rounds of review of the draft scale items (please see Appendix 11 for a list of the Review Sessions) I conducted the first Pilot Survey.

Pilot Survey 1

I invited 137 personal contacts, who were currently working in organizations, to fill out the Pilot Survey. The survey was hosted on FluidSurveys (currently Survey Monkey), which is the survey platform providers for University of Victoria. Like in Study 1, the personal contacts were drawn from a larger list of contacts consisting of my LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp networks, and my ex-colleagues and acquaintances. After two rounds of reminders 95 persons completed the survey. The participants were diverse representing both private (40%) and public organizations (60%), more than 19 types of industries (agriculture, banking, call center, etc.), more than 21 types of functions (administration, analysis, business development, etc.), and covered both genders (females 42%). They were in the age groups from 18-24 to 55-64, their educational background ranged from holding Bachelor's to Doctoral degrees, they worked in small to large sized organizations (68%) with experiences from less than a month in their current organization to more than 3 years (39%), and at entry level (72%) to top management positions. Please see Appendix 36 for a description of the sample. The average time taken to complete the survey was 16 minutes.

The CFA of the data suggested that for each of the seven main variables, except the person-group fit scale, the items loaded strongly on one factor (eigenvalues ranged from 2.59 to 7.38), the scales were reliable (Cronbach's alpha (α) ranged from 0.84 to 0.94), the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) indicated convergent validity (AVE ranged from 0.52 to 0.65), the item factor loadings were mostly greater than 0.70, and the item correlations were mostly significant, greater than 0.50, and less than 0.90 (Hair Jr., Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Please see Appendices 4 to 10 for the eigenvalues, the reliabilities, the AVEs, and the item wise factor loading for each of the seven main variables. A point to note was that the negatively worded items consistently showed lower factor loadings. Based on these results six rounds of reviews were conducted (please see Appendix 11) to improve the items in the person-group fit scale, and the items of other scales which had factor loadings of less than 0.70 and item correlations of less than 0.50, following which I embarked on the second Pilot Survey.

Pilot Survey 2

I invited 647 personal contacts, who were currently working in organizations and who had not participated in Pilot Survey 1, to fill out the second Pilot Survey, which was also hosted on FluidSurveys (currently Survey Monkey). The personal contacts were drawn from a larger list of contacts consisting of my LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp networks, my ex-colleagues and acquaintances, and through snowball sampling. After two rounds of reminders 247 persons completed the survey (38% response rate). The set of participants were not only different from Pilot Survey 1 but also more diverse representing both private (54%) and public organizations (46%), more than 26 types of industries (advertising, airlines, banking, etc.), more than 26 types of functions (accounting, administration, analysis, etc.), and more representative of the genders (females 45%). They were in the age groups from 18-24 to 65 or above, with educational backgrounds ranging from no formal degrees to PhD. They worked in small to large sized organizations (67%) with tenures of less than a month in their current organization to more than 3 years (49%), and from entry level (59%) to top management positions (9%). Finally, the participants were from 33 countries (Canada: 45%, India: 21%, US: 6%, etc.). Please see Appendix 37 for a description of the sample. The average time to complete the survey was 17 minutes.

The CFA showed that for each of the seven critical variables the items loaded strongly on one factor (eigenvalues ranged from 2.99 to 3.85), the scales were reliable (α ranged from 0.83 to 0.91), the AVE indicated convergent validity (AVE ranged from 0.50 to 0.64), the item factor loadings were mostly greater than 0.70, and the item correlations were mostly significant, greater than 0.50, and less than 0.90 (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Please see Appendices 4 to 10 for the eigenvalues, the reliabilities, the AVEs, and the item-wise factor loading for each of the seven main variables. It was again noted that the negatively worded items showed lower factor loadings and it was decided to drop the negatively worded (or reverse coded) items from the Main Survey. This is consistent with the recent observations by Wright et al. (2017). Based on the measurement results of Pilot Survey 2, nine rounds of reviews were conducted (please see Appendix 11) to improve the scale item loadings especially those with factor loadings of less than 0.70 and item correlations of less than 0.50. Please see the last column in Appendices 4 to 10 for the final scale items used in the Main Survey.

The Main Survey

As elaborated in Chapter 4 on Research Design, the participants in the three-wave Main Survey consisted of Mechanical Turk's (MTurk's) Human Intelligence Task (HIT) workers currently also working in other organization(s). Initially, I reached out to HIT workers with "Masters," a qualification awarded by Mechanical Turk to those workers who are "high performing," "(demonstrate) excellence across a wide range of HITs," and "continue to pass (MTurk's) statistical monitoring" (Amazon.com, 2018, p. 1), for which MTurk charges a premium to requesters. However, the number of survey participants stagnated at around 150 after the first week. I eventually heeded the advice from the micro-blogging site of HIT workers, TurkerNation, removed the requirement for "Masters" qualification, and opened up the participation to HIT

workers with a track record of at least 98% approval of the HITs completed. In order to encourage participation in all the three waves of the Main Survey I offered aggressive remuneration to the HIT workers. More specifically, the first wave participants were offered USD 0.75, the second wave participants USD 1.50, and the third wave participants USD 3.00. All the three waves were hosted on FluidSurvey. There was on average gap of about two weeks between each wave. Please see Appendix 38 for the schedule of the surveys. In the first wave I gathered data about the main predictor variables and included a “complete the sentence” task, which also doubled as a check on the quality of the responses. In the second wave, I gathered data about the mediator and the control variables, and in the third wave, I gathered data about the outcome variables. In the second and the third waves I also gathered data about a few additional variables. Table 4.2 in Chapter 4 on Research Design lists the variables for which I gathered data in each of the waves.

A total of 696 participants responded in wave 1, out of which 670 were invited to participate in wave 2, excluding those who were not currently working, and those who completed the sentence task (i.e., I think an organization is a *great place to work* when ...) with responses that did not make sense (e.g., “GORDEN,” “city,” “citizen”). After two rounds of follow up in wave 2, through individual emails, 522 participants responded, who were then invited to participate in wave 3. Again after two rounds of follow-up through individual emails, 481 participants responded in wave 3. So, the final data analysis was done with N=481. The set of participants represented private (88%) and public organizations (12%), more than 33 industries (advertising, agriculture, airlines, etc.), more than 28 functions (accounting, administration, analysis, etc.), and two genders (females 44%). They were in the age groups from 18-24 to 65 or above, with educational backgrounds ranging from high school degrees to PhDs. They worked in small (36%), medium (26%) and large sized organizations (37%), with tenures from less than a month in their current organization to

over 3 years (63%), and from entry level (55%) to top management (4%). Finally, the participants were from 14 countries, with the bulk of them being from the US (84%) and India (13%). Please see Appendix 39 for a description of the sample. The average time taken to complete the survey was 10 minutes (4 minutes for wave 1, and 3 minutes each for waves 2 and 3).

Measurement

As discussed in Chapter 4 on Research Design and Chapter 5 on Study 1, and the preceding sections on Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, the scales to measure the seven main variables in the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* were developed/refined rigorously in the spirit of the recommendations made by Wright et al. (2017). This mechanism of building up the scales for the seven main variables is given in Appendices 4 to 10. The measurement scale of each variable appears to be strong with adequate factor loading, reliability, validity, and inter-item correlations (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). They are discussed below commencing with predictor variables followed by mediator, outcome, and control variables.

Predictor Variables

Person-work fit (PWF) signifies "... the relationship between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work" (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 284). The 6-item scale used to measure PWF in our Main Survey is based on the existing definition in the literature (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), and the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and the Person-work fit scales of Saks and Ashforth's (1997), and Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001), as shown in Appendix 4. However, unlike the Saks and Ashforth's (1997) scale, I parsed out knowledge, skills, and abilities into three separate items, so that the survey participants were not confounded by the inclusion two or more of these dimensions in a single item. My scale includes items such as "I am the right type of person for this type of work," and "I think my abilities are a

good match for the requirements of my work.” The items cover the demand-ability fit and the needs-supply fit dimensions of person-job fit (Chuang, Shen & Judge, 2014; Edwards, 1991). The demand-ability fit signifies the alignment between a person’s knowledge, skills, abilities and personality, and that is required for the work (Edwards, 1991), which is measured by the first, the third, and the fifth items. The needs-supply fit represents the alignment between the person’s interests and the work characteristics (Chuang et al., 2014) represented by the second, the fourth and the sixth items. Tables 6.1 (a) and (b) provide a list of the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust person-work fit scale (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Table 6.1 (a): Person-Work Fit Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
PWF1. I think my abilities are a good match for the requirements of my work.	5.98	1.12	-1.75	6.72	0.86	0.89
PWF2. I am the right type of person for this type of work.	5.88	1.27	-1.61	5.60	0.87	0.88
PWF3. I have the right set of knowledge for my work.	6.21	0.92	-1.73	7.75	0.69	0.91
PWF4. The work that I do matches well with my interests.	5.35	1.74	-1.15	3.34	0.78	0.90
PWF5. There is a good match between my skills and those necessary for my work.	5.99	1.18	-1.74	6.44	0.84	0.89
PWF6. My personality is a good match for my work.	5.71	1.38	-1.34	4.72	0.79	0.89

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.92); Proportion: 1.03; α : 0.91; AVE: 0.65

Table 6.1 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	PWF1	PWF2	PWF3	PWF4	PWF5	PWF6
PWF1	1.00					
PWF2	0.78	1.00				
PWF3	0.61	0.60	1.00			
PWF4	0.63	0.72	0.46	1.00		
PWF5	0.78	0.70	0.66	0.63	1.00	
PWF6	0.64	0.71	0.53	0.71	0.63	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Person-supervisor fit (PSF) is defined by the compatibility in the dyadic relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate (Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Several approaches are used to measure person-supervisor fit. To measure the work value congruence between supervisors and subordinates studies used a comparative emphasis scale (cf. Adkins, Russell & Werbel, 1994; Meglino, Ravlin & Adkins, 1989). The comparative emphasis scale of Adkins et al., 1994 used a 24-item-forced-choice instrument to identify the degree of dominance of the work values of achievement, fairness, honesty, and helping and concern in the supervisor and the subordinate. Studies also used Rokeach's (1973) value survey, which asks respondents to rank values, in order to measure the congruence between leaders and subordinates (Krishnan, 2002). However, in order to measure the individual's *perceived* PSF, based on the existing definition in the literature (Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), and the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and expanding the 3-item scale of Kim and Kim, (2013), which focuses only on the match in values, I used a 6-item scale in the Main Survey, as shown in Appendix 5. This scale includes the dimensions based on a match in work ethic, flexibility, guidance and communication style, and includes items such as "I like the way my supervisor interacts with me," and "The approach I have towards work is similar to that of my

supervisor.” Please see Tables 6.2 (a) and (b) for the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust scale, except for the item “My supervisor provides me with sufficient flexibility in how I do my work” which had a factor loading of less than 0.70.

Table 6.2 (a): Person-Supervisor Fit Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
PSF1. My supervisor’s work ethic are similar to those of mine.	5.28	1.53	-1.04	3.45	0.88	0.92
PSF2. I think my supervisor’s worldviews are similar to those of mine.	4.85	1.63	-0.63	2.56	0.78	0.93
PSF3. The approach I have towards work is similar to that of my supervisor.	5.13	1.61	-0.94	3.13	0.88	0.92
PSF4. My supervisor provides me with sufficient flexibility in how I do my work.	5.56	1.48	-1.30	4.24	0.63	0.94
PSF5. I think my supervisor provides me adequate guidance to do my work.	5.38	1.54	-1.19	3.80	0.83	0.93
PSF6. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that my supervisor also values in my work.	5.28	1.52	-1.01	3.43	0.88	0.92
PSF7. I like the way my supervisor interacts with me.	5.43	1.62	-1.18	3.64	0.89	0.92

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (4.81); Proportion: 1.02; α : 0.94; AVE: 0.69

Table 6.2 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	PSF1	PSF2	PSF3	PSF4	PSF5	PSF6	PSF7
PSF1	1.00						
PSF2	0.69	1.00					
PSF3	0.83	0.72	1.00				
PSF4	0.54	0.49	0.53	1.00			
PSF5	0.71	0.60	0.71	0.54	1.00		
PSF6	0.77	0.73	0.77	0.55	0.73	1.00	
PSF7	0.77	0.68	0.75	0.61	0.80	0.77	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Person-group fit (PGF) signifies the compatibility of values, personalities and abilities between individuals and their work groups (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The perceived person-group fit, may be supplementary or complementary or both. As observed in the meta-analysis on fit by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) PGF was the weakest of the fit measures in the existing literature. I too found it difficult to get adequate scale reliability and validity in the Pilot Survey 1. However, after much brainstorming and tweaking of the items, such as from “my work-group” to “most of my work-group” and from “demands of my work-group” to “requirements of the people I work with,” I managed to get a scale reliability of 0.88 in the second Pilot Survey. Based on the existing definitions in the literature (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012), the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and building on Vogel and Feldman (2009) and Seong and Kristof-Brown (2012), I used a well-rounded yet parsimonious 7-item scale in the Main Survey. Please see Appendix 6 for the scale items. The scale used in the Main Survey includes items such as “Most of the people I normally work with are similar to me in how they approach work,” and “The things that I value in my work are similar to those that most of the people I normally work with also value in my work.” Tables 6.3 (a) and 10 (b) provide a list of the vital

parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust person-group fit scale (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Except for the item “I get along well with most of the people I normally interact with in my work” the factor loadings were greater than 0.70.

Table 6.3 (a): Person-Group Fit Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
PGF1. I get along well with most of the people I normally interact with in my work.	6.04	1.00	-1.80	7.89	0.66	0.91
PGF2. I think most of the people I normally work with have worldviews similar to those of mine.	4.98	1.41	-0.59	2.89	0.70	0.90
PGF3. Most of the people I normally work with have similar commitment towards work as I do.	5.45	1.30	-1.31	4.88	0.79	0.89
PGF4. My abilities are a good match with most of the people with whom I normally interact in my work.	5.73	1.12	-1.41	5.60	0.74	0.90
PGF5. Most of the people I normally work with are similar to me in how they approach work.	5.33	1.34	-0.98	3.64	0.85	0.89
PGF6. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that most of the people I normally work with also value in my work.	5.40	1.31	-1.14	4.19	0.84	0.89
PGF7. My personality is a good match with most of the people I normally work with.	5.66	1.25	-1.45	5.34	0.79	0.89

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (4.14); Proportion: 1.02; α : 0.91; AVE: 0.59

Table 6.3 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	PGF1	PGF2	PGF3	PGF4	PGF5	PGF6	PGF7
PGF1	1.00						
PGF2	0.41	1.00					
PGF3	0.49	0.57	1.00				
PGF4	0.57	0.50	0.56	1.00			
PGF5	0.49	0.63	0.73	0.60	1.00		
PGF6	0.47	0.62	0.71	0.59	0.78	1.00	
PGF7	0.65	0.54	0.56	0.65	0.62	0.62	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Person-organization fit (POF) is defined as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4-5). Please see Appendix 7 for the build-up of the scale to measure POF. Based on the definition of POF by Kristof (1996), and the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, I used a better-rounded 8-item scale in the Main Survey, compared to the scales used by Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) and Valentine, Godkin and Lucero (2002), which both focus overwhelmingly on matching of values. My scale covers the additional dimensions of a match in organizational support, structure, and expectations, and includes items such as “I like the way the things are done in my organization,” and “The support I get from my organization is consistent with my needs.” Please see Tables 6.4 (a) and 6.4 (b) for the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which again indicate a robust scale (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), except for the item “My abilities match my organization’s needs for me.”

Table 6.4 (a): Person-Organization Fit Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
POF1. I like the way things are done in my organization.	5.10	1.58	-0.96	3.08	0.90	0.95
POF2. The support I get from my organization is consistent with my needs.	5.24	1.60	-0.98	3.05	0.90	0.95
POF3. The rewards I gain from being a part of my organization are as per my expectations.	5.19	1.65	-0.95	2.95	0.82	0.95
POF4. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that my organization also values in my work.	5.24	1.51	-0.91	3.16	0.87	0.95
POF5. My abilities match my organization's needs for me.	5.73	1.30	-1.52	5.31	0.69	0.96
POF6. The culture of my organization is a good match for me.	5.40	1.60	-1.19	3.75	0.89	0.95
POF7. My organization has the kind of reputation that I like.	5.37	1.57	-1.02	3.27	0.89	0.95
POF8. The purpose of my organization is what I would like it to be.	5.35	1.58	-1.07	3.40	0.86	0.95

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (5.84); Proportion: 1.01; α : 0.96; AVE: 0.73

Table 6.4 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	POF1	POF2	POF3	POF4	POF5	POF6	POF7	POF8
POF1	1.00							
POF2	0.85	1.00						
POF3	0.74	0.78	1.00					
POF4	0.77	0.80	0.73	1.00				
POF5	0.60	0.58	0.53	0.64	1.00			
POF6	0.80	0.81	0.72	0.77	0.64	1.00		
POF7	0.79	0.78	0.70	0.76	0.65	0.80	1.00	
POF8	0.77	0.73	0.71	0.75	0.59	0.76	0.82	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Mediator Variables

Meaning in work (MIW) is a psychological state derived “from the intrinsic qualities of the work itself, the goals, the values, and the beliefs that the work is thought to serve” and pertains to the role or “what am I doing?” and not from “where that work is done” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). It is the significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw intrinsically from the relationship with our work (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). As shown in Appendix 8, I used a 5-item scale in the Main Survey, based on the existing definitions (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Wrzesniewski, 2003), and the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and similar to the 6-item scale used by May et al. (2004), Schnell et al. (2013), and Steger et al. (2012), only more parsimonious and without using the scale title words “meaning” in the items. The scale includes items such as “My work provides me fulfilment,” and “I feel a connection with my work.” Please see Tables 6.5 (a) and (b) for the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust scale, except for the item “I can be myself when I do my work.” In the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* it is suggested that meaning *in work* mediates the relationship between person-work fit and employees’ perception of a *great places to work*. Accordingly, the scale items for person-work fit reflect the perceived match or alignment with work and the scale items for meaning *in work* focus on the significance such fit in the mind of the person.

Table 6.5 (a): Meaning *in* Work Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
MIW1: I can be myself when I do my work.	5.68	1.32	-1.44	4.88	0.53	0.94
MIW2: The work I do is very important to me.	5.46	1.61	-1.09	3.33	0.90	0.87
MIW3: My work serves a greater purpose.	5.21	1.56	-0.89	3.11	0.81	0.89
MIW4: My work provides me fulfilment.	5.21	1.69	-0.89	2.85	0.93	0.87
MIW5: I feel a connection with my work.	5.32	1.63	-0.97	3.14	0.91	0.87

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.43); Proportion: 1.04; α : 0.91, AVE: 0.68

Table 6.5 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	MIW1	MIW2	MIW3	MIW4	MIW5
MIW1	1.00				
MIW2	0.48	1.00			
MIW3	0.40	0.76	1.00		
MIW4	0.50	0.84	0.74	1.00	
MIW5	0.49	0.81	0.75	0.87	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Meaning at work (MAW) is the psychological state derived from “the organizational community within which the work is embedded” and pertains to membership or “where do I belong?” and not from “what one does” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315). It is the significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw extrinsically, from the relationship with our work environment (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). I developed a scale to measure MAW from scratch, shown in Appendix 9, as the one existing scale did not represent the essence of the variable that we intended to measure. A three-item scale (Clausen, Burr & Borg, 2014; Clausen & Borg, 2011) drawn from the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (Pejtersen,

Kristensen, Borg & Bjørner, 2010) is labeled as meaning *at* work although the items are more representative of meaning *in* work. Some studies use Steger et al.s' (2012) measure of meaningful work also to measure meaning *at* work (Golparvar & Abedini, 2014; Abedini, Golparvar & Mosahebi, 2014). Based on the definition of MAW, and the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, I finally used a 7-item scale in the Main Survey, as shown in the last column of Appendix 9. It includes items such as “Being a part of my organization means a lot to me,” and “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.” Please see Tables 6.6 (a) and (b) for the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust scale (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* it is suggested that meaning *at* work mediates the relationship between person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fits and employees' perception of a great places to work. Accordingly, the scale items for the three types of fit reflect the perceived match or alignment with supervisor, work-group, and organization while the scale items for meaning *at* work focus on the significance of such fits in the mind of the person.

Table 6.6 (a): Meaning *at* Work Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
MAW1. I cherish the environment in my organization.	4.79	1.67	-0.68	2.55	0.88	0.94
MAW2. I feel that the environment in my organization allows me to be myself.	5.37	1.51	-1.14	3.69	0.79	0.95
MAW3. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	5.05	1.73	-0.89	2.78	0.90	0.94
MAW4. Being a part of my organization means a lot to me.	5.04	1.75	-0.82	2.70	0.93	0.94
MAW5. I feel a connection with the people in my organization.	5.35	1.52	-1.21	3.98	0.84	0.95
MAW6. I think that my organization serves a greater purpose.	5.12	1.63	-0.79	2.84	0.77	0.95
MAW7. Being a part of my organization provides me a sense of fulfilment.	5.08	1.73	-0.87	2.80	0.91	0.94

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (5.21); Proportion: 1.01; α : 0.95; AVE: 0.74

Table 6.6 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	MAW1	MAW2	MAW3	MAW4	MAW5	MAW6	MAW7
MAW1	1.00						
MAW2	0.74	1.00					
MAW3	0.80	0.74	1.00				
MAW4	0.84	0.71	0.85	1.00			
MAW5	0.72	0.69	0.79	0.75	1.00		
MAW6	0.67	0.56	0.65	0.72	0.65	1.00	
MAW7	0.80	0.69	0.80	0.88	0.75	0.76	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Outcome Variable

Employees' perception of a great place to work (GPW). In the practitioner literature, the Great Places to Work Institute proposes trust, pride, and camaraderie as three “dimensions” of a *great place to work* (Burchell & Robin, 2010). However, as discussed in Chapter 2 (literature

review), other studies in the practitioner and the academic literature indicate several other antecedents of a *great place to work*. For example, the levels of challenging work (Mencl & Lester, 2014), job satisfaction (Butler, 2014), learning and career development opportunities (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Joyce, 2003; Smith, 2002), compensation (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Love & Singh, 2011), recognition (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014; Philipsen, 2014), flexibility (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010), autonomy (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Butler, 2014), concern for employee wellness (Philipsen, 2014; Joyce, 2003), safety orientation (Philipsen, 2014), work-life balance (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Philipsen, 2014; Joyce, 2003), fun work environment (Joyce, 2003), and inspiring leadership (Love & Singh, 2011), etc., are some of the suggested antecedents of a *great place to work*. Studies also suggest organizational level indicators like corporate citizenship behavior (Love & Singh, 2011), strong mission statements that indicate benefit to society (Henderson, 2013; Joyce, 2003), contribution to a good cause (Haavisto, 2010, as cited in Soininen, 2013), and well laid out and easily accessible ethics statements (Hoover & Pepper, 2014), etc., also as indicators of a *great place to work*.

However, these “dimensions” or antecedents don’t describe the phenomenon, employees’ perception of a *great place to work*, and hence, don’t help in its measurement. Considering the lack of an established definition or scale or dimensions in academia I cast a wide net and started with a 13-item scale in the first Pilot Survey. Although the scale reliability ($\alpha=0.94$) and the convergent validity (AVE=0.63) was high I decided to remove the references to *great places to work* in the scale items for the second Pilot Survey, concerned that such references may be leading the survey participants. Finally, based on the second Pilot Survey, I used six items in the three-wave Main Survey, which included items such as “I would rate my organization at the top of list of places to work,” and “I can’t think of a better place to work for than my current organization.”

Please see Appendix 10 for the build-up of the scale, and Tables 6.7 (a) and (b) for the vital parameters and inter-item correlations, which indicate a robust scale.

Table 6.7 (a): Employees' Perception of a Great Place to Work Scale

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loading	Item reliability
GPW2. I can't think of a better place to work for than my current organization.	4.33	1.87	-0.35	1.83	0.88	0.96
GPW3. I would prefer to stay in my current organization even if I have the opportunity to move to another one.	4.57	1.85	-0.52	2.08	0.87	0.96
GPW4. I would rate my organization at the top of list of places to work.	4.56	1.89	-0.48	2.02	0.93	0.95
GPW5. Working in this organization adds to my happiness.	4.86	1.78	-0.76	2.60	0.91	0.95
GPW6. I feel proud to work in this organization.	5.07	1.72	-0.89	2.88	0.91	0.96
GPW7. I enjoy working in this organization.	5.13	1.72	-0.94	2.96	0.91	0.96

Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (4.88); Proportion: 1.01; α : 0.96; AVE: 0.81

Table 6.7 (b): Inter-item Correlations

	GPW2	GPW3	GPW4	GPW5	GPW6	GPW7
GPW2	1.00					
GPW3	0.82	1.00				
GPW4	0.86	0.82	1.00			
GPW5	0.78	0.78	0.84	1.00		
GPW6	0.77	0.77	0.83	0.84	1.00	
GPW7	0.75	0.78	0.82	0.87	0.87	1.00

All the correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$)

Control Variables

In this section I discuss additional variables which may have a significant bearing on the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great place to work* and my measurement approach to those variables.

Financial security of the employee could potentially be a key factor in how important meaning *in* and *at* work is to the employee in a *great place to work*. Those in dire need of money may not be in a position to be too mindful about meaning *in* and *at* work. For them a *great place to work* would be one which provides them an adequate livelihood. However, those who are financially secure may be more discerning of meaning *in* and *at* work, and which may matter more for them in a *great place to work*. I measure financial security through the question “if I quit my job and not join another one - I think I can sustain my current standard of living for the following number of months” and offered the option to select between “less than a month,” “1-6 months,” “1-3 years,” and “over 3 Years,” expecting a positive relationship between financial security and meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and *great place to work*.

Individuals belonging to different *age groups* may view what is important to them at work differently (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Sutherland, Torricelli & Karg, 2002). For example, Mencl and Lester (2014) observed that generation Y, those born between 1978 and 1999, value career advancement, immediate feedback, and recognition more than other generations (although there is some recent, yet to be published research, indicating otherwise). Thus for members of generation Y meaning *in* and *at* work may not be as important in a *great place to work*. In Study 1, participants mentioned that their yearning for meaning *in* and *at* work increased with age (e.g., “... I think that comes from getting older”) and also that they found their work more meaningful as they got better at it (e.g., “... it evolves from experiences of work and finding what doesn’t work ... and what

does ... and what is more satisfying ... experience ...”). Considering that age may influence the extent to which meaning *in* and *at* work matter and the expectations from a *great place to work* we measure the age group of the survey participants. Also the level of *education* may sway a person’s expectation from a *great place to work*. Those with more intellectual curiosity, which may be as a result of higher education, could ponder more about meaning *in* and *at* work in a *great place to work*. Hence we gather data about the highest level of formal educational of the participant.

Work salience or the importance that we accord to our work in our life (Naidoo, Bowman & Gerstein, 1998) may be very relevant for what a *great place to work* is for us, and the work salience may vary from person to person. For example, Wrzesniewski et al. (1997) found that among a set of administrative assistants, in the same organization, with similar profiles, about a third thought that their work was a job, another third interpreted their work as a career, while the balance considered their work as a calling. For persons who consider their work as a job (i.e., work only to pay the bills), meaning *in* and *at* work may not be too important in a *great place to work*. However, for those who perceive their work as a calling, meaning *in* and *at* work would be of paramount importance in a *great place to work*. Hence, to control for this I gathered categorical data about work salience based on the conceptualization of job, career and callings in Wrzesniewski et al. (1997). The survey participants needed to select one of the following statements that best described their work:

- My work is only a job that helps me to pay the bills.
- My work is a career that provides me growth opportunities.
- My work is my calling or the purpose of my life.

The *availability of alternate employment* or lack of it may play a role in the perceptions of a *great place to work*. Individuals who think that there are several other available employment opportunities or who think that are more employable (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004) maybe more discerning about meaning *in* and *at* work than those with limited or no choice. Drawing from Tourangeau et al. (2014) and Heavey, Holwerda and Hausknecht (2013), I asked the survey participants how long would it take them to find an alternate employment in which they can at least maintain their current lifestyle.

Given the wide differences in public (government owned) and private organizations with respect to work motivation (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007), culture and strategic management (Ring & Perry, 1985), level of bureaucracy (Boyne, 2002) and risk averseness (Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998), the *organization type* in which employees work may set the tone for what a *great place to work* is for the individual. Also, *organization size* has been found to influence attitudes and behavior (Talacchi, 1960), engagement (Indik, 1965), levels of commitment (Wholey, Christianson & Sanchez, 1992), etc., which also indicates that employees in large and small organizations may have different aspirations for what is a *great place to work*. The *length of experience in the current organization* may also play a role in shaping the perceptions of a *great place to work* given that with experience one gets better at a job which might make it more meaningful, as a participant of Study 1 mentioned, or alternately persons may find it meaningless if the expertise makes the job too mundane. Finally, top management and entry level personnel may have different expectations of a *great place to work* considering the different responsibilities that they hold. Hence, data pertaining to the survey participants' *organization type, organization size, length of service, and level in the organization* were also gathered.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1 predicted that the employees’ perceived person-work fit is positively related with the employees’ perception of a *great place to work* and that the relationship is mediated by meaning *in* work. Please see Figure 6.1a for the CFA model that tests the measurements. Each covariance is significant and the signs are as expected. The model diagnostics are described along with those for the structural model. Please see Figure 6.1b for the structural model, estimated using SEM (maximum likelihood method), through STATA. The estimates indicate partial support for Hypothesis 1. The path coefficient between meaning *in* work and employees’ perception of a *great place to work* is stronger (0.77, $p < .01$) and higher compared to that between person-work fit and employees’ perception of a *great place to work* (0.22, $p < .01$). However, both the path coefficients are significant. The path coefficient between person-work fit and meaning *in* work is 0.9958 and significant ($p < .01$).

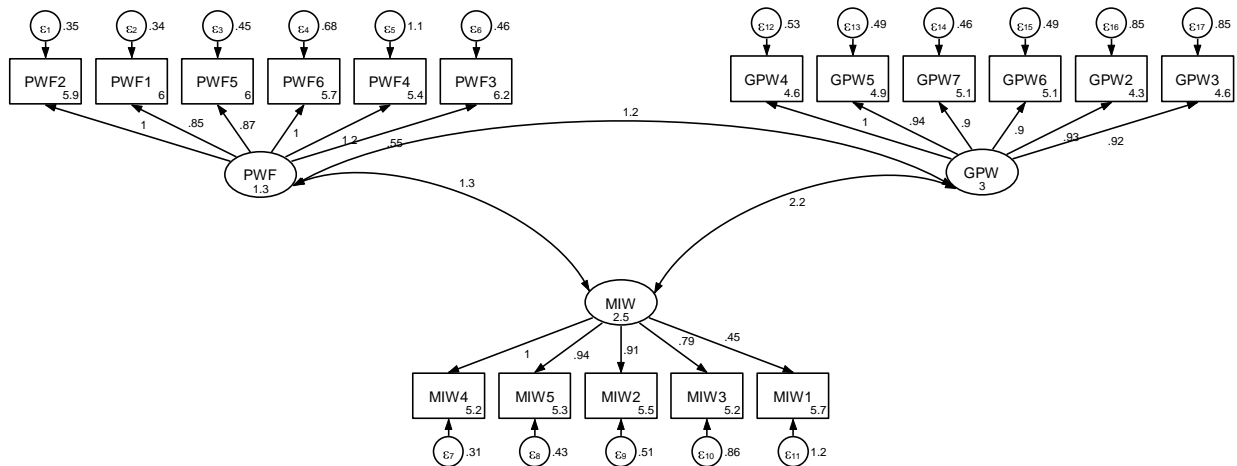


Figure 6.1a: CFA for testing the measurement model for Hypothesis 1. PWF: Perceived person-work fit; MIW: Meaning *in* work; GPW: Employees’ perception of a *great place to work*. Please see Tables 6.1, 6.5 and 6.7 for a description of the scale items. Each covariance is significant ($p < 0.01$).

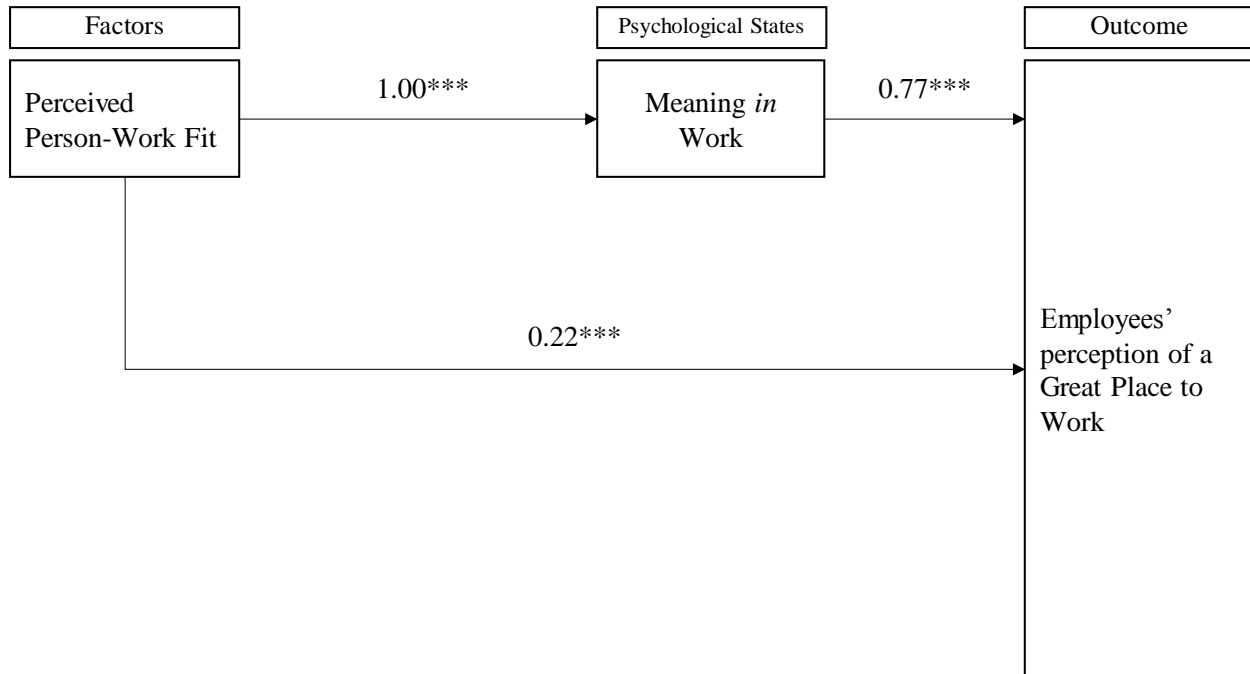


Figure 6.1b: The structural model for Hypothesis 1 (***) $p < 0.01$.

The CFA and the structural model parameters were diagnosed according to the recommendations of Bagozzi and Yi (1988), and mostly support the models, as given below:

1. No negative error variances,
2. Error variances \neq zero (significance not reported in Stata),
3. No correlations > 1 ,
4. No correlations too close to 1,
5. No factor loadings too small (< 0.50) or too large (> 0.95),
6. Standards errors not very large,
7. Chi squared (116) = 591.49, $p < 0.00$ (although Chi squared is significant Bagozzi and Yi, (1988) suggests that “as the sample size increases, leading to high power, the test is likely to reject a true model” (p. 77)),
8. Adequate statistical power of chi squared ($N > 200$),
9. Comparative Fit Index or Model Comparison Chi Squared Difference Test or Incremental Fit Index = 0.94 (recommended ≥ 0.90),

10. Tucker-Lewis index or Non-normed Fit index =0.93 (recommended ≥ 0.95),
11. Adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI) (not reported by Stata),
12. Standardized root mean square residual = 0.058 (recommended low),
13. Root mean squared error of approximation = 0.092; lower bound = 0.085 (recommended < 0.05), upper bound = 0.10 (recommended ≤ 0.10),
14. Linear Q-plot of normalized residuals with slope > 1 (not reported by Stata),
15. Total Coefficient of Determination or Pseudo R Squared = 0.933 (recommended high),
16. N = 481 (recommended > 200),
17. Sample size to number of free parameters: $481/116=4.15$ (recommended ≥ 5),
18. Individual item ≥ 0.5 and composite reliabilities ≥ 0.60 ,
19. Average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.50 ,
20. Parameter estimates partly confirming Hypothesis 1,
21. Normalized residuals mostly < 2 , and
22. Modification indices mostly > 3.84 (recommended < 3.84).

The data was also analyzed through multiple regressions. Each latent variable was represented by the weighted average means of the items, with weights based on the factor loading of the item (Booyesen, 2002). The regressions estimates, through STATA, also indicated a partial support for Hypothesis 1, suggesting that meaning *in* work partially mediates the relationship between the perceived person-work fit and the employees' perceptions of a *great place to work*. Please see Table 6.8 for the regression coefficients. The data indicates that person-work fit significantly predicts meaning *in* work (0.87, $p < .01$) and employees' perceptions of a *great place to work* (0.95, $p < .01$). However, person-work fit (0.30, $p < .01$) is still significant when meaning *in* work (0.72, $p < .01$) is introduced in the regression, although the power drops substantially. When the control variables were introduced the model remained significant and had an adjusted R

squared of 0.61. Interestingly, the data suggests that one is more likely to rate one's organization as a *great place to work* if one is in the top or the middle management, or if one perceives that getting an alternate comparable job is difficult.

Table 6.8: The Regression Results (Hypothesis 1)

Outcome variables →	Meaning in Work	Great Places to Work	Great Places to Work
Number of observations	479	479	479
Meaning in Work			0.72***
Meaning at Work			
Person-work Fit	0.82***	0.89***	0.30***
Person-supervisor Fit			
Person-group Fit			
Person-organization Fit			
Type of Organization Dummy (Public = 1)	-0.13	0.02	0.12
Organizational Size Dummy (Small = 1)	-0.06	0.08	0.12
Experience in Current Organization Dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)	0.07	0.08	0.03
Level in Current Organization Dummy (Middle & Top Management = 1)	0.07	0.31**	0.26**
Work Saliency Dummy (Callings = 1)	0.71***	0.48***	-0.04
Gender Dummy (Male = 1)	-0.04		-0.01
Education Dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)	0.30***	0.39***	0.18
Age Group Dummy (35+ years = 1)	0.09		-0.12
Estimated Time Required to Find Alternate Job Dummy (1+ years = 1)	-0.06	0.21*	0.25***
Estimated Time One Could Survive Without A Job or Financial Security Dummy (1+ years = 1)	0.20*	0.28**	0.14
Adjusted R squared	0.49	0.42	0.61

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

Hypothesis 2 predicted that employees' perceived person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fit are positively related with the employees' perceived *great place to work*

and this relationship is mediated by meaning *at work*. Please see Figure 6.2a for the CFA model that tests the measurements. Each covariance is significant and the signs are as expected. The model diagnostics are described along with those for the structural model. Please see Figure 6.2b for the structural model, estimated using SEM (maximum likelihood method), through STATA. The estimates indicate partial support for Hypothesis 2, with the path coefficient between meaning *at work* and employees' perception of a *great place to work* being stronger (0.71, $p < .01$) than those between the other fits and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. However, the path coefficient between perceived person-organization fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* is also significant (0.44, $p < .01$), and that between perceived person-group fit is significant and negative (-0.17, $p < .01$).

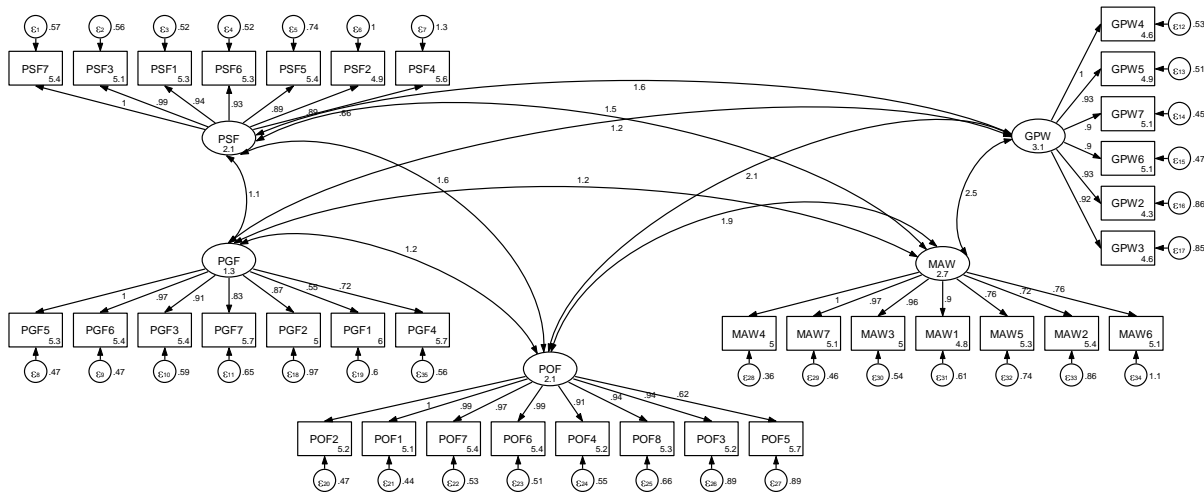


Figure 6.2a: CFA for testing the measurement model for Hypothesis 2. PSF: Perceived person-supervisor fit; PGF: Perceived person-group fit; POF: Perceived person-organization fit; MAW: Meaning *at work*; GPW: Employees' perception of a *great place to work*. Please see Tables 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.6 and 6.7 for a description of the scale items. Each covariance is significant ($p < 0.01$).

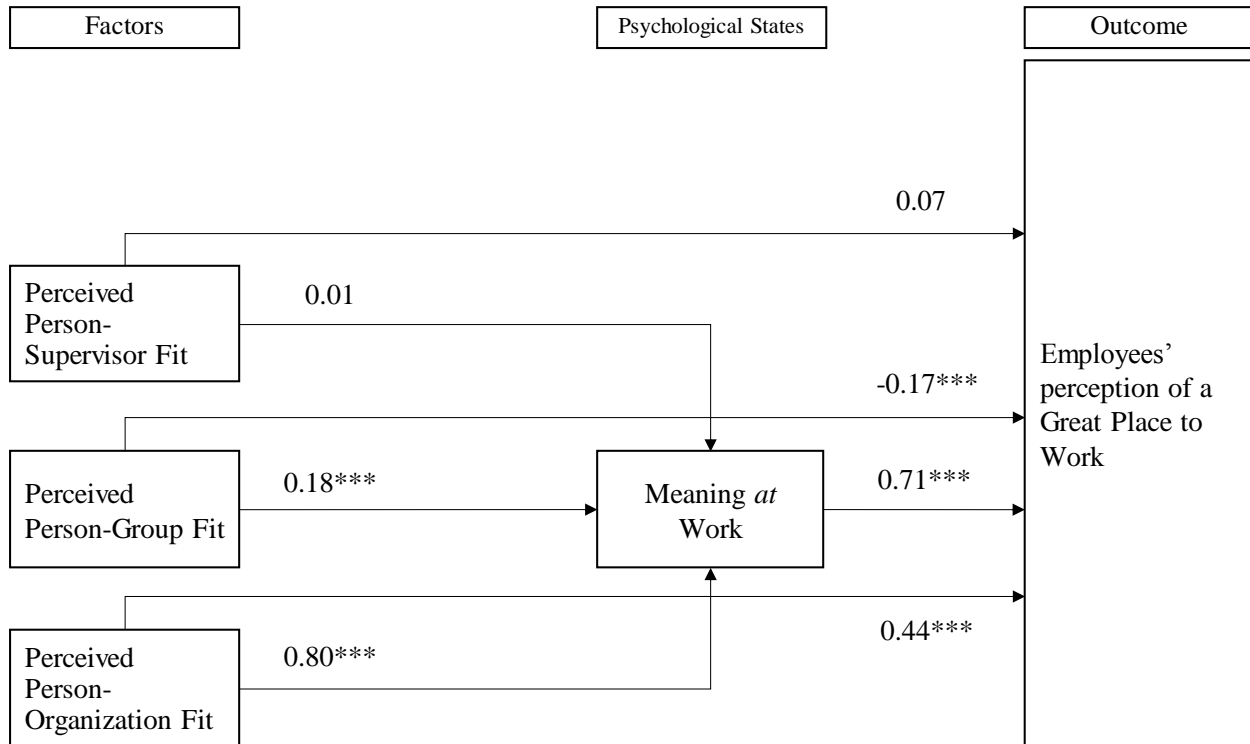


Figure 6.2b: The structural model for Hypothesis 2 (***) $p < 0.01$.

The CFA and the structural model parameters were diagnosed according to the recommendations of Bagozzi and Yi (1988), and mostly support the models, as given below:

1. No negative error variances,
2. Error variances \neq zero (significance not reported in Stata),
3. No correlations > 1 ,
4. No correlations too close to 1,
5. No factor loadings too small (< 0.50) or too large (> 0.95),
6. Standards errors not very large,
7. Chi squared (550) = 1906.10, $p < 0.00$ (although Chi squared is significant Bagozzi and Yi, (1988) suggests that “as the sample size increases, leading to high power, the test is likely to reject a true model” (p. 77)),
8. Adequate statistical power of chi squared ($N > 200$),

9. Comparative Fit Index or Model Comparison Chi Squared Difference Test or Incremental Fit Index = 0.93 (recommended ≥ 0.90),
10. Tucker-Lewis index or Non-normed Fit index = 0.92 (recommended ≥ 0.95),
11. Adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI) (not reported by Stata),
12. Standardized root mean square residual = 0.04 (recommended low),
13. Root mean squared error of approximation = 0.072; lower bound = 0.068 (recommended < 0.05), upper bound = 0.075 (recommended ≤ 0.10),
14. Linear Q-plot of normalized residuals with slope > 1 (not reported by Stata),
15. Total Coefficient of Determination or Pseudo R Squared = 0.999 (recommended high),
16. N = 481 (recommended > 200),
17. Sample size to number of free parameters: $481/550=0.87$ (recommended ≥ 0.5),
18. Individual item ≥ 0.5 and composite reliabilities ≥ 0.60 ,
19. Average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.50 ,
20. Parameter estimates partly confirming Hypothesis,
21. Normalized residuals mostly < 2 , and
22. Modification indices < 3.84 .

The data when analyzed through multiple regression, using STATA, indicated partial support for Hypothesis 2, suggesting that meaning *at work* partially mediates the relationship between person-organization fit and employees' perceptions of a *great place to work*. Please see Table 6.9 for the regression results. The data indicates that perceived person-organization fit significantly predicts meaning *at work* (0.66, $p < .01$) and employees' perceptions of a *great place to work* (0.88, $p < .01$), each separately. However, person-organization fit (0.40, $p < .01$) is still significant when meaning *at work* (0.66, $p < .01$) is introduced into the regression, although the power drops substantially. The Hypothesis is not supported for person-supervisor and person-group fits. The model with the control variables has a high adjusted R squared of 0.77.

Interestingly, the data continues to suggest that one is more likely to rate one's organization as a *great place to work* if one is in the top or the middle management, or if one perceives that getting an alternate comparable job is difficult.

Table 6.9: The Regression Results (Hypothesis 2)

Outcome variables →	Meaning <i>at Work</i>	Great Places to Work	Great Places to Work
Number of observations	479	479	479
Meaning in Work			
Meaning at Work			0.66***
Person-work Fit			
Person-supervisor Fit	0.08*	0.11**	0.06
Person-group Fit	0.24***	0.03	-0.13**
Person-organization Fit	0.62***	0.81***	0.40***
Type of Organization Dummy (Public = 1)	-0.01	-0.00	0.01
Organizational Size Dummy (Small = 1)	-0.11	-0.03	0.04
Experience in Current Organization Dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)	-0.05	0.05	0.09
Level in Current Organization Dummy (Middle & Top Management = 1)	0.10	0.34***	0.28***
Work Salience Dummy (Callings = 1)	0.41***	0.38***	0.11
Gender Dummy (Male = 1)	-0.13	-0.16*	-0.07
Education Dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)	0.18*	0.18*	0.06
Age Group Dummy (35+ years = 1)	-0.00	-0.07	-0.07
Estimated Time Required to Find Alternate Job Dummy (1+ years = 1)	-0.01	0.18*	0.19**
Estimated Time One Could Survive Without A Job or Financial Security Dummy (1+ years = 1)	0.19*	0.25**	0.13
Adjusted R squared	0.63	0.64	0.77

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

Hypothesis 3 predicts that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are positively related to each other. The CFA model (maximum likelihood method), using STATA, indicates support for

this Hypothesis, with a significant and strong covariance between meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work (2.34, $p < .01$). Please see Figure 6.3 for the CFA results.

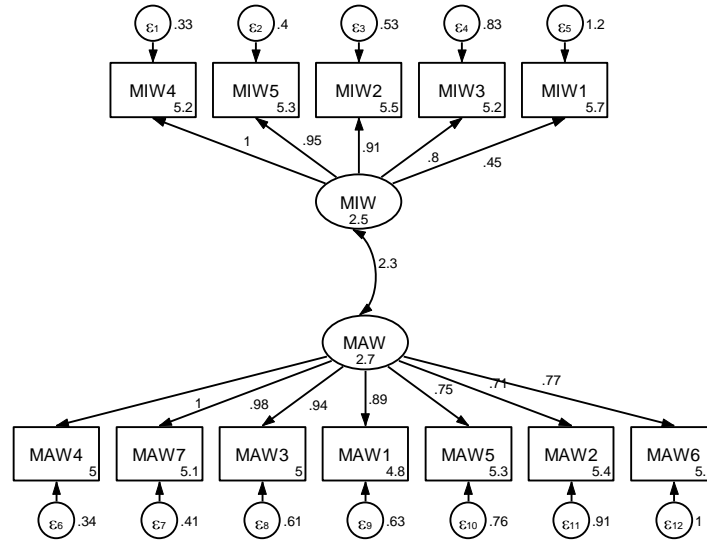


Figure 6.3: CFA for testing the measurement model for Hypothesis 3. Please see Tables 6.5 and 6.6 for a description of the measured items.

The CFA model parameters were diagnosed according to the recommendations of Bagozzi and Yi (1988), and mostly support the model, as given below:

1. No negative error variances,
2. Error variances \neq zero (significance not reported in Stata),
3. No correlations > 1 ,
4. No correlations too close to 1,
5. No factor loadings too small (< 0.50) or too large (> 0.95),
6. Standards errors not very large,
7. Chi squared (53) = 630.69, $p < 0.00$ (although Chi squared is significant Bagozzi and Yi, (1988) suggests that “as the sample size increases, leading to high power, the test is likely to reject a true model” (p. 77)),
8. Adequate statistical power of chi squared ($N > 200$),

9. Comparative Fit Index or Model Comparison Chi Squared Difference Test or Incremental Fit Index = 0.91 (recommended ≥ 0.90),
10. Tucker-Lewis index or Non-normed Fit index = 0.89 (recommended ≥ 0.95),
11. Adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI) (not reported by Stata),
12. Standardized root mean square residual = 0.050 (recommended low),
13. Root mean squared error of approximation = 0.151; lower bound = 0.140 (recommended < 0.05), upper bound = 0.161 (recommended ≤ 0.10),
14. Linear Q-plot of normalized residuals with slope > 1 (not reported by Stata),
15. Total Coefficient of Determination or Pseudo R Squared = 0.993 (recommended high),
16. N = 481 (recommended > 200),
17. Sample size to number of free parameters: $481/53=9.08$ (recommended ≥ 5),
18. Individual item ≥ 0.5 and composite reliabilities ≥ 0.60 ,
19. Average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.50 ,
20. Parameter estimates confirming Hypothesis,
21. Normalized residuals mostly < 2 , and
22. Modification indices mostly > 3.84 (recommended < 3.84).

The data when analyzed through multiple regression, using STATA, provides strong support for Hypothesis 3, suggesting that meaning *in* work is likely to have greater impact on meaning *at* work, rather than the other way round. Please see Table 6.10 for the regression results. The model including control variables has a high adjusted R squared of 0.74. Interestingly, the data also provides a clear evidence of a significant positive relationship between living a calling (0.42, $p < .01$) and meaning *in* work.

Table 6.10: The Regression Results (Hypothesis 3)

Outcome variables →	Meaning <i>in</i> Work	Meaning <i>at</i> Work
Number of observations	479	479
Meaning in Work		0.81***
Meaning at Work	0.76***	
Person-work Fit		0.17***
Person-supervisor Fit	-0.07*	
Person-group Fit	-0.01	
Person-organization Fit	0.09**	
Type of Organization Dummy (Public = 1)	-0.15	0.12
Organizational Size Dummy (Small = 1)	-0.06	0.04
Experience in Current Organization Dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)	0.09	-0.10
Level in Current Organization Dummy (Middle & Top Management = 1)	0.08	0.00
Work Saliency Dummy (Callings = 1)	0.42***	-0.09
Gender Dummy (Male = 1)	-0.07	0.02
Education Dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)	-0.01	0.09
Age Group Dummy (35+ years = 1)	0.10	-0.08
Estimated Time Required to Find Alternate Job Dummy (1+ years = 1)	-0.06	0.05
Estimated Time One Could Survive Without A Job or Financial Security Dummy (1+ years = 1)	0.05	0.04
Adjusted R squared	0.74	0.74

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

The structural model for the full proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* (Figure 6.4) provides evidence of partial support for the model. When meaning *in* and meaning *at* work are both included in the model, the meaning *in* work is no longer significant, indicating that meaning *at* work has a stronger power to predict employees' perception of a *great place to work* (0.63, p<.01). Among the different types of fit, person-organization fit is the one with the strongest predictive power (0.52, p<0.01). Interestingly, the data indicates that perceived person-group fit is

negatively related to employees' perception of a *great place to work* (-0.18, $p < .01$), and that perceived person-work and person-supervisor fits are not significant, which are deliberated upon in the Discussion Chapter.

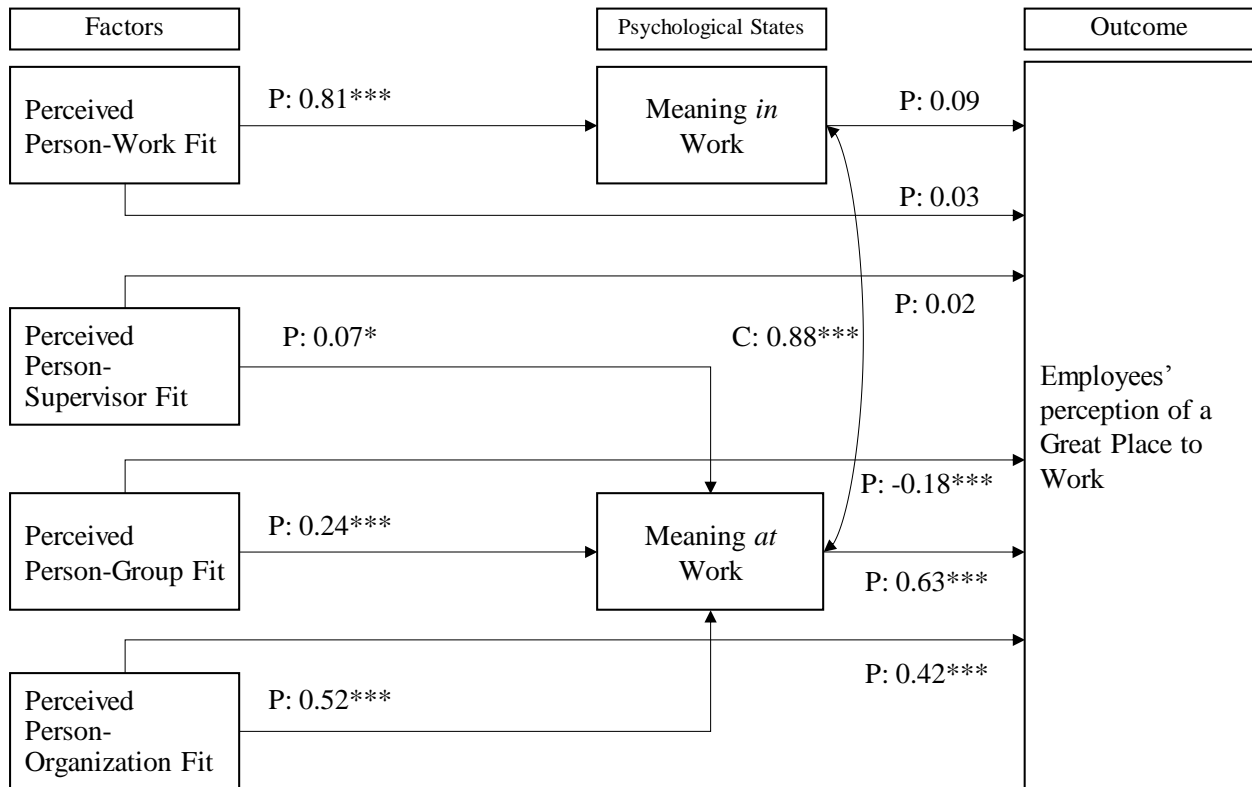


Figure 6.4: The structural model for the Meaning-through-Fit model of *Great Places to Work*. P: Path coefficient; C: Covariance (***) $p < 0.01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$).

The results of the multiple regressions for the full proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* are similar to that from the structural model (please see Table 6.11 for the regression coefficients)². In other words, when meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are included

² If we compare the above results with that of the Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, they are quite similar (the scale items for measuring the seven main variables are not vastly different between Pilot Surveys 1, and 2, and the Main Survey

in the model, it is observed that meaning *at work* (0.58, $p < .01$) is the more significant predictor of employees' perceptions of a *great place to work*, as also indicated by the correlations between the items in the scales of each of the seven main variables (please see Appendix 40). Meaning *in work* (0.11, $p < .05$) being a weaker predictor of employees' perceptions of a *great place to work* was counter to my expectations based on the indications from Study 1. Among the different types of fit, person-organization fit (0.38, $p < .01$) was the strongest predictor of the employees' perception of a *great place to work*, while perceived person-supervisor fit seemed to be a very weak predictor (0.06, $p > 0.10$), and there was a significant and negative relationship (-0.14 , $0.01 < p < 0.05$) between perceived person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. With respect to the control variables, it can be seen that they do not contribute much to the explanatory power of the full model. For example, the adjusted R squared increased from 0.7602 to 0.7693 after the

– please see Appendices 4 to 10 in this regard). The data from both the Pilot Surveys support Hypothesis 1 and indicate a complete mediation by meaning *in work* in the relationship between person-work fit and perceptions of a great place to work, and partly support Hypothesis 2, indicating a partial mediation by meaning *at work* in the relationship between person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits, and employees' perceptions of great place to work. Hypothesis 3 is also supported with meaning *in work* showing a greater predictive power for meaning *at work* as is the case in the three-wave Main Survey. For the full model, the results of the Pilot Surveys 1 and 2 are similar to that of the Main Survey, indicating a strong and significant predictive power of the meaning *at work* and person-organization fit with respect to employees' perceptions of a great place to work. Surprisingly, the data indicates a negative relationship between person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* in the case of the Main Survey and in the case of the second Pilot Survey, which had a higher reliability (α : 0.88) for the person-group fit scale and N (247) compared to that of the first Pilot Survey (α : 0.63, N: 95). Please see Appendix 41 for the regression coefficients of Pilot Surveys 1 and 2.

introduction of the control variables. Although the signs are mostly as expected, the control variables are not significant except for that of the employees' level in the current organization and the availability of alternate comparable job. The data continues to suggest that those in the middle or the top management and those who think that alternate comparable jobs are not easily available are more likely to rate their organization as a *great place to work*.

Table 6.11: The Regression Results (Meaning-through Fit Model of Great Places to Work)

Outcome variable →	Employees' perception of a <i>great places to work</i>
Number of observations	479
Meaning <i>in</i> work	0.11**
Meaning <i>at</i> work	0.58***
Person-work fit	0.03
Person-supervisor fit	0.06
Person-group fit	-0.14**
Person-organization fit	0.38***
Type of organization dummy (Public = 1)	0.02
Organizational size dummy (Small = 1)	0.05
Experience in current organization dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)	0.08
Level in current organization dummy (Middle & top management = 1)	0.26***
Work salience dummy (Callings = 1)	0.05
Gender dummy (Male = 1)	-0.06
Education dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)	0.07
Age group dummy (35+ years = 1)	-0.08
Estimated time required to find alternate job dummy (1+ years = 1)	0.19**
Estimated time one could survive without a job or financial security dummy (1+ years = 1)	0.12
Adjusted R squared	0.77

*** $p < 0.01$

** $p < 0.05$

* $p < 0.10$

Robustness Check

The results obtained in the three-wave Main Survey were corroborated through a Scenario Analysis, described in Chapter 4 on Research Design. I used FluidSurvey to host the scenario descriptions and the survey, and invited MTurk's Human Intelligence Task (HIT) workers who completed all the three waves of the survey in Study 2, offering a remuneration of USD 1.00 per survey completed. The scenario descriptions consisted of four scenarios: High person-work fit, and high person-supervisor, high person-group, and high person-organization fits (Scenario 1); high person-work fit and low person-supervisor, low person-group, and low person-organization fits (Scenario 2); low person-work fit and high person-supervisor, high person-group, and high person-organization fits (Scenario 3); and low person-work fit and low person-supervisor, low person-group, and low person-organization fits (Scenario 4), enclosed in Appendix 13.

The 481 qualifying MTurk HIT workers were randomly assigned to each one of the four scenarios and invited to participate in the respective scenario analysis. They were to read the scenario and fill out the survey, which consisted of the seven main variables of the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, using the same scales as used in the three-wave Main Survey, and a few demographic variables, that is, gender, education, age-group, and country. After two rounds of follow-up through individual emails, 399 invitees participated, consisting of 99 for Scenario 1 and 100 each for Scenarios 2, 3 and 4. So, the final data analysis was done with N=399. Participants consisted of 43% females, in the age groups from 18-24 to 65 or above, with educational backgrounds ranging from high school degrees to PhDs, and representing 12 countries, with the bulk being from the US (84%) followed by India (12%). Please see Appendix 42 for a description of the sample. The average time taken to complete the survey was 6 minutes.

The scale reliabilities of the seven main variables ($\alpha > .91$ for each variable) were higher than that obtained in the Main Survey. The means of each of the seven main variables across the 4 scenarios, given in Table 6.12, show that the interventions based on the findings from Study 1, Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and the Main Survey as described in Chapter 4 on Research Design, worked for each of the 4 scenarios. The means provide a clear indication of the association between person-work fit and meaning *in* work, and that between person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits and meaning *at* work. The means also show that the meaning *at* work and the cluster of fits (person-supervisor, person-group, and person organization fits) associated with it have a greater impact on the employees' perception of a *great place to work*, with Scenario 2.0 (low person-supervisor, person-group, and person organization fits) mean (2.44) being lower than that (5.13) of Scenario 3.0 (low person-work fit).

Table 6.12: The Means of the Seven Main Variables

Scale/Variable	Scenario 1.0 (High PWF; High PSF, PGF, POF)	Scenario 2.0 (High PWF; Low PSF, PGF, POF)	Scenario 3.0 (Low PWF; High PSF, PGF, POF)	Scenario 4.0 (Low PWF; Low PSF, PGF, POF)	Overall
N	99	100	100	100	399
Perception of a Great Place to Work	6.18	2.44	5.13	1.93	3.92
Meaning <i>in</i> work	6.32	4.96	4.20	3.11	4.64
Meaning <i>at</i> work	6.23	2.69	5.46	2.31	4.16
Person-work fit (PWF)	6.39	5.23	4.22	3.34	4.79
Person-supervisor fit (PSF)	6.11	2.07 @	5.88	2.03 @	4.02
Person-group fit (PGF)	6.01	2.65 @	5.34	2.42 @	4.10
Person-organization fit (POF)	6.30	2.47	5.62	2.20	4.14

All the means are statistically different at 5% significance level *except* that between Scenarios 2.0 and 4.0, in the cases of person-supervisor and person-group fits marked with @.

The results of SEM (maximum likelihood method) estimation, using STATA, were mostly similar to that obtained in the three-wave Main Survey. Please see Appendix 43 for the CFA of the measurement model and the covariance for each of the Hypothesis. The regression analysis, using STATA, indicated strong support for Hypothesis 1, suggesting a perfect mediation by meaning *in* work in the relationship between person-work fit and employees' perception of *great place to work*. With respect to Hypotheses 2 and 3, and the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, the data from the Scenario Analysis clearly replicates the results obtained from the Main Survey. In other words, the data indicates that meaning *at* work and person-organization fit are the main predictors of employees' perception of a *great place to work*, and meaning *in* work has a stronger influence on meaning *at* work. Please see Appendix 44 for the regression results.

Chapter 7: Understanding the Findings (Study 3)

In this chapter I discuss the sample, the procedure, and the results of Study 3, the objective of which was twofold. The first objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the findings from Study 2. As described in Chapter 4 on Research Design, in Study 3 we wanted to understand the relative importance of the dimensions within each of the 7 critical variables in the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* in order to gain further insights into the dynamics of the model. The second objective was to dig deeper into the finding from Study 2 that showed meaning *at work* is significantly more powerful in predicting the employees' perception of a *great place to work* as compared to meaning *in work*, although Study 1 indicated otherwise.

Sample and Procedures

I invited 173 potential candidates, who were currently working in organizations, to participate in the structured interview. The contacts were drawn from my acquaintances through LinkedIn, Facebook and WhatsApp networks, and that of my supervisor's, and excluded those who participated in Study 1. I conducted two rounds of follow-up for interviews with the potential candidates, in the second round focusing more on those persons who had a longer tenure in an organization or those who held top management positions. The latter strategy was adopted in order to solicit insights from potential management experts/leaders. Finally, 45 persons participated in the interviews. They represented private (47%) and public organizations (53%), 18 industries (accounting, auditing, banking, etc., covering 11 out of the major Canadian industries, by employment, identified by Statistics Canada (2018)), 18 functions (administration, auditing, business development, etc.), and male (51%) and female (49%) genders. They were in the age groups from 18-24 to 55-64, with educational backgrounds ranging from high school degrees to

PhDs, they worked in small (13%), medium (13%), and large (73%) sized organizations, with tenures from 1-6 months in their current organization to over 3 years (49%), and at entry level (33%) to middle/top management positions. Finally, the participants were from 16 countries, primarily Canada (42%) and India (20%). The total interview duration was a little over 31 hours with the average being 41 minutes. Please see Appendix 45 for a more detailed description of the sample.

The structured interviews were conducted face-to-face (25) and through audio visual medium (20), such as Skype, at venues and at times convenient to the interviewee. The list of 13 main questions used to guide the interview is enclosed in Appendix 14. The questions were mostly pointed ones focused on seeking explanations for the findings of Study 2 (e.g., “Data indicates that when we have a good fit with our work (there is a match between the person and the work in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, and interests) we find our work more meaningful or we attach more meaning *in* work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning in work? Why?”), except one open ended question on when the participant consider an organization to be a *great place to work*. All participants agreed to the interview being audio recorded. I analyzed the audio recording, transcribed the relevant portions, and identified themes as described in the next section.

Results and Discussion

Person-Work Fit

In Study 2 person-work fit was represented by 5 dimensions, the survey participants’ perceived match between their work and their knowledge, skills, abilities, personality and interest. The data from Study 3, indicates that a match of interests or finding the work interesting is what

is most likely to create meaning *in* work, as indicated by the ensuing quotes (the “...” indicate the pauses that the interviewees took as they were responding to the questions; the details of the interviewee offering the quote is disclosed to the extent that, I think, will not compromise her/his anonymity; the quotes are provided verbatim; words in parentheses and *italics* indicate my comments/questions seeking clarifications):

“It’s almost like you are interested towards the job ... if you have an interest in something that you do ... that makes it more meaningful ... (*and so interest you have developed because...*) yeah for whatever reason ... something that’s meaningful to you ... so then ... so it’s all kind of interconnected.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“I will attach more importance to the interest ... now if you want a reasoning for that I can explain it ... how this is ... what is my firm belief after having worked so much ... I believe knowledge, skill and hence combination of both abilities ... these are those 3 things which can be acquired of ... so ... and these can be as greatly acquired or as less acquired depending upon your interest on it ... so if I am very interested in say IT and I have a some natural inclination towards gadgets or technology I will be more likely working towards acquiring knowledge skills and abilities in that field ... but if I am averse to say technology ... and even if you put me in a greater class or greater training or greater opportunity I will only tend to get only as much knowledge as is necessary for doing my job ... just that much ... and not probably go deep into it ... so I will attach more importance to the interest part ... ah rather than knowledge and abilities ... these are ... of course all are important ... because ultimately alone interest will not get me anywhere ... you have to be supplemented with knowledge and skills also but I will give more importance to the interest ... that actually gives more satisfaction in whatever I am doing ... if it matches then I will probably ... if interest matches with my work ... then I will say it is the best combination to have to help you to excel in your work ...;”

- CFO, Packaging Industry

“interests ... or ... well ... yeah ... in an ideal situation ... your interests would feed your knowledge and skills and abilities ... but even if you are ... even if you don’t know how to use excel ... the fact that you are interested in statistics should ... would make you a better fit ... a good fit for the job ... so maybe interests ... (*why?*) ... because you would care about the outcome ... there is something at stake ... because you care about the outcome ... and

most of us are capable of learning ... the knowledge and skills ... that make the work more productive ... but if you don't care about the outcome then it's not going to be meaningful."

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

"This is the highest one (*marks on interest in the question sheet*) ... (*why?*) ... I just think it's personal motivation ... it's the motivation ... and if this is not at the top of the list I honestly think ... you are gonna have a lot of ... hard times as you go through your work ... and sometimes you have an interest here and interest there ... sometimes you find out that you don't have an interest and then you start doing the work and you do have an interest ... so it's really kind of an interesting thing ... what comes first ... the interest in the work or the work then the interest ... the last thing after all of my career ... I spent seven years in information systems and information technology ... me who is not a computer engineer ... it's really extraordinary and did I find it interesting ... absolutely ... but I was forced to take that job because I had been successful in another job and then the guy who was head of our ISIT organization globally said (name removed) you are gonna come and work with me and you are gonna solve this problem and I said I don't think I am the right person ... and he said you are the right person ... and I was like eeh ... and then it piqued my interest so ... it's chicken and the egg you know ... what comes first."

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

"Can I add another one ... I would say it's pretty much ideology ... so ... this is what I was talking about when I was talking about research ... so the difference ... let's say the trade-off between research and teaching ... I would rather work in a place that would have a fit with my interest in doing research than in a place that would value pretty much exclusively teaching ... so the more a place actually allows me to do research ... so the sort of ideological structure that they have towards research and what is important and what's not important ... so maybe you could call this interest ... the better or the more comfortable would be."

- Academic 1, Public Sector

"Interest ... and interest substantiated by knowledge ... just interest is not enough ... I am very interested in movies right ... but does it make me make movies ... not ... right. My match is perfect ... my interest ... in my case which is solving ... my main interest is solving problems ... not by interacting with people ... say you do this ... but by creating a problem that solves the problem ... it should be a technical problem ... not a problem ... between husband and wife ... I wouldn't be able to solve that ... my interest is in solving technical problems ... if my work allows me to do that ... streamline a process ... right ... why are

you doing this here ... so if that kind of interest that I have ... I can use that at my at my work that will be the best fit for me.”

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Industry

“If you are personally interested in what you are doing ... and you can ... it fits your personality ... then that makes it meaningful to me.”

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

Several interviewees thought that the dimensions of knowledge, skill, and abilities were important dimensions of person-work fit with respect to meaning *in* work. Interviewees explained that high match on these dimensions created confidence, which in turn increased the chances of success or the chances of being able to make a contribution, and meaning *in* work:

“To me the fit ... between the person and the work and knowledge skill abilities ... to me that speaks to what I see as a critical piece ... of people’s success at work ... and if there is a fit ... all these dimensions produce confidence ... when you are confident you can be successful ... then you believe ... you believe ... you can be successful ... and everybody loves to be successful ... nobody likes to fail.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“I think I would put skills and abilities above personality and interest in the sense that ... umm ... again your feeling of satisfaction is tied to whether you are utilized or not.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“I would say knowledge, skills and abilities ... because in terms of the output of the work ... this what should help you right ... like going back to being a sales manager ... and like you don’t know how to talk to people right ... you don’t have interpersonal skills ... your skills are not at a point where you can have a good fit between your work and you won’t have a good meaning in your work ... because you won’t be delivering what you need to deliver ... whereas I think personality and interests would be a lot more associated with ...

ahh ... with the supervisor and the co-workers ... how you line up with the work environment.”

- Business Development Associate, Media

“Ahh ... abilities ... (*why?*) ... in the beginning of this year ... in the beginning of January ... we have got this new employee ... but ... she is not performing well ... so it feels like school ... I have to teach her everything like ... from the baby step ... but then work is not school ... work is somewhere you come and you show what you have got ... like your abilities ... but then I have to teach you how to use computer ... how to use outlook ... excel ... word ... so I thought ... ability is very important ... it kind of relates to your knowledge and skills as well ... but ability includes everything.”

- Administration Assistant, Trading

“Umm ... I would say ... probably ability ... as number one ... then ... knowledge ... then maybe personality ... and then skills and then interests ... (*why abilities as number one?*) ... actually ... I think I would put interests higher ... yeah ... probably abilities, knowledge, interests, then personality then skills ... why abilities is number one ... probably because ... if you don't have the ability ... yeah I just feel like if you don't have the ability everything else kind of falls away ... like ... if ... it's almost like a factor that ... limits ... your ability to find meaning in the work ... if you don't have that ability in the first place.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

In summary, it seems that a match with regard to interest emerged as more important than the other four dimensions (match with regard to knowledge, skills, abilities and personality). The data also indicated other nuances such as the level of the person in an organization may determine which dimension is important for meaning *in* work. For example, if a person is in a leadership position the match between the actual and the required personality for the role is important for meaning *in* work, as a mismatch will inhibit the ability to make a contribution (e.g., “if you are in a leadership role then it is not just enough to have knowledge skills and abilities interests ... you need to also have the personality for you to be a leader ... but if you were not a leader ... and you

... if it didn't matter ... if you were not a leader and your work would determine ... your success at work were determined more by your own input than personality," - Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation).

Person-Supervisor Fit

Person-supervisor fit was measured with the help of the dimensions of a perceived match with the supervisor in respect to work ethic, worldviews, values, approach towards work, autonomy, guidance, and communications/interactions style. According to the data, match with respect to the interaction/communication styles seem to contribute most to meaning *at work*, as exemplified by the below quotes (interaction/communication style also had the highest factor loading in the Main Survey of Study 2):

"I think communication style is so fundamental ... I think you could get away with working successfully with the supervisor ... gee I don't know ... worldview values ethics ... could you work with someone who ... the two of you have a very different view of the world ... and still successfully work together ... because what I am suggesting is ... as long as you can overcome all that ... if the communication is clear ... respectful. Different worldviews ... different ethnicities ... different religious teachings ... different ideas about morality and ethics ... yeah I think you could ... and still have ... as long as there is a very solid respectful communication ... that acknowledges those differences ... and maybe puts them aside ... so I think these are nice to have ... but the communication style is essential ... because until and unless you have that you could ... you could be aligned and ... but I can't read your mind ... and if you are my supervisor ... and you don't give me a clue as to what's going on ... I mean we might be more friendly and have a better ... friendship ... relationship ... and harmony that way but ... I think in terms of work ... communication style is pretty fundamental."

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

"It's a fact that someone treats you well and values your input and cares about you as a person and as an employee ... I think that makes things really meaningful."

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“Yeah communication style is ... I think one of the top things ... for me ... (can you elaborate on why you said communication style matters a lot) ... sure ... so I am lucky that I have two people that I closely work with that will respond within an hour ... of any questions big or small ... to help me to kind of ... make sure one that I am on the right page ... or just to kind of ... but I know I have been in ... I know there are others that get very little communication ... guidance ... part of that communications and I don't think that I could ... work in that ... because I like to be interactive with people ... I can certainly sit in my office and work all by myself ... but it's nice to have ... working amongst the common goal.”

- Administrative Staff 3, Public Sector

“To me this would be number one (*marks on the communication/interaction style on the question sheet*) ... (*why communication style is the top one?*) ... well I just think it is probably the ... by that I mean not just the communication style but it's ... to me having a transparent and honest relationship is really really important ... it can make or break a relationship ... so to me that's really number one ... yeah ... and two ways ... like I mean it's not ... it's like some of the big people that work for me were so good at managing me even though I was their manager ... because they forced this frequent and effective communication which was obviously transparent respectful ... umm ... clarity ... all of those things were really really really essential to a good relationship ... yeah.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

According to the data, match with supervisor in respect to values and approach towards work also seem to contribute importantly to meaning *at* work:

“Values should match ... you want your values to be similar.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“For more meaning ... I would say ... probably values ... for both supervisor and co-workers ... if you can find some shared level in any values ... then I think ... you can create more meaning in the way that you interact with them and the work that you do.”

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

“I think values is probably the underpinning ... so maybe I will go with that one.”

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

“Approach towards work (*why?*) ... I worked with various supervisors in different teams ... and their style is ... each of the supervisors working style is different ... but I have to match their working style ... I have to learn how they approach towards work ... first ... to perform better ... to perform the better team work ... approach toward work ... like how they approach ... it’s kind of similar to how this person values this work.”

- Administration Assistant, Trading

A few interviewees pointed out that what is important in person-supervisor fit and meaning *at work* depends on the role:

“Again I think it comes down to role basis ... for someone who is in a creative role ... autonomy is a kind of important ... because you wanna be able to ... in order to be creative you need to just go sit in the coffee shop by yourself ... two hours and just think about things ... in the beach ... then you need to have that autonomy ... if you are at a financial role and you are like auditing ... account reporting or taxation ... you don’t need as much autonomy ... that’s less important to you ... I think ... in that individual ... because you have procedures and guidelines to follow ... so I think at that point it comes down to the individual role.”

- Business Development Associate, Media

The data clearly indicated that a match in worldviews with the supervisor was not required unless you were working in organizations such as immigration services or the embassy where you deal with and cater to a diversity and your supervisor needs to have similar views on diversity as you do. The matching of the world views mattered if it was core to the work. However, mostly the interviewees articulated clearly that world views don’t count:

“World view can be different ... I don’t think that it’s necessary ... you can have a different world view and still have a good fit with your supervisor ... I think you should be able to keep your opinions distinct from the work that you do ... so you are working in a very

heterogeneous group where people have different viewpoints ... so that doesn't impact your work in any way ... so you got to work to ... rather for a specific purpose ... which could have nothing to do with your world view ... yeah but ... it need not be world views but ... you know people that you work with ... you want them to have certain sense of shared values ... you know you want them to ... you know the people that I work with ... I like them to ... if they are liberal in their mind set ... it is something that I appreciate ... they should be open to different cultures ... they should be umm ... truly meritocratic ... umm ... so these are ... values that I like ... I believe those values are what will bring out the best ... in people ... so I like a sense of shared values ... but your political views could be different ... your world view could be different ... because world views influenced by what you consider your world to be ... some people have a much wider world ... some people have a narrower world ... so world view is relative ... it could be different ... your world could be different from mine ... so world views can be different. See world views doesn't matter ... you could have different world views ... when you come to work you have a shared purpose ... a common purpose for which we are working together ... as long as there is a fit ... in that respect it is fine ... you can have any other world view ... world view doesn't have to match."

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

"You are a Trump supporter ... I am a Clinton supporter ... you know the entire United States ... is filled with workplaces ... where that divide I am sure exists ... and yet you know there is ... there is not ... there is a quite a bit of tension there but can you function with different worldviews."

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

"I don't know how many people talk about like their worldviews with their boss ... I feel like that's not really a thing and especially like I think when it comes to things like politics ... you like ... may be don't really want to talk about that with the boss because if they are not on the same page then that might create tensions."

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

"Political views in my opinion do not ... I would consider it the least important ... it doesn't matter whether you and me have different political outlooks ... but ... because ... that is something which is not directly proportional or directly impacting my work actually as such ... so you might be a communist I might be a capitalist ... you might be liking Trump ... I might not be liking Trump ... these things are not impacting our daily work life ... these are purely ... this will probably be the least ... then in terms of ... so if I start from the bottom ... probably I will rate political views as the least."

- CFO, Packaging Industry

“I can tell you what’s not important for me ... it’s the worldviews ... not relevant ... ok ... at least for me ... it’s not relevant.”

- Information Technology Director, Financial Services

In summary, the data suggested that in person-supervisor fit match with regard to the communication style seems to be fundamental for meaning *at work*. The match in communication style could help overcome other differences. Alignment with values and approach towards work were also considered important as those impacted performance. The role of the employee in the organization also plays an important factor. One aspect was clear, that matching with regard to world views was not considered to be relevant.

Person-Group Fit

With regard to *person-group fit* the dimensions that helped measure it in Study 2 were the perceived match with respect to approach towards work, getting along, commitment, abilities, values with regard to work, world views and personality. There doesn’t appear to be a clear winner with regard to the dimension that influences meaning *at work*. Match in terms of values, commitment towards work, getting along were all articulated:

“I would say values for sure ... for co-workers it would be different because they are people who you will probably interact ... at least in my case I interact with co-workers way more than with my boss ... so I get to like actually share an office with someone ... so I am around people like on a weekly basis ... and I think that ... having things in common so when you are like taking your break and you are talking with people ... you have something to talk about ... and just having ... definitely for me ... having similar values is really important and finding things in common.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“I am looking at it from our management team ... the commitment towards a common goal I would say is number one ... umm ... this (valuing the work) is very highly related to number one.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“I think the rest are fine ... I think others are all fine ... I don't think anyone is more important than the other one ... but ... umm ... getting along is useful ... you certainly don't want a team that doesn't get along with one another ... so getting along is useful ... I think that would help people perform better.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“Getting along and commitment towards work ... I think those two matter ... I think co-workers should get along ... with each other ... irrespective of their world views ... I should be able to work with who is a ... I have a colleague who loves to hunt right ... you know I am a non-violent ... a vegetarian guy ... but does that mean I hate him ... no ... because it is his worldview ... it is his lifestyle ... we go to lunch and he orders the beef steak and I order vegetable sandwich and we get along irrespective of the fact that we have our own differences and all of that ... but at work we are like ... we are a team ... so getting along is number one ... right ... number two I think ... would be that commitment ... we must have shared commitment ... you see we are in a team ... the commitment would be you know like to get this thing done ... I think those two are the main.”

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

“Valuing each other's work (*why?*) ... umm ... because ... I think that has to do with mutual respect ... umm ... yeah that ... yeah I have a lot of ... I develop a lot of admiration for

colleagues ... you know ... because I think ... when I admire colleagues ... I know that I can lean on them ... when I get stuck or when I get too ... in my own work ... where I need to talk through something ... you know where I ... I find there is something challenging ... if I admire them and their way of doing work ... then there is a mutual respect but there is also a mutual trust ... somewhere there ... in the way that ... yeah if I value their work ... then I develop some formal trust ... in their work ... yeah.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

“If it’s co-worker right ... so to me ... ahh ... it is team play ... that means ... commitment towards work ... I know others are important ... I mean get along ... valuing the work right ... because it’s like at the same level and the ... valuing the work ... I can do only so much ... influencing the others you know ... my co-worker ... it may not be my job right ... maybe supervisor ... so that’s why ... you know ... I am the least person to ... talk about value ... and even if I say ... well ... oh my God ... who are you ... why are you even talking about that ... you are my supervisor? ... making the relationship worse ... so that’s why ... just commitment ... this kind of promise ... you know why we are here for ... we have a common ground about it ... because a co-worker can be ... sometimes I do the person’s job ... if there is no commitment ... that means how can you trust this person ... if you may not trust you may not talk a lot right ... then even if you talk just simply ... say ... hi ... bye ... so ... if there is a commitment then there would be you know ... trust ... and then if there is trust ... making mistake ... that’s ok you know ... we all making mistakes ... that maybe help us get along.”

- Accountant, Public Sector

The position on worldviews is more ambiguous in the case of person-group fit as compared to person-supervisor fit. Interviewees articulate in favor as well against the importance of match in worldviews with the co-workers:

“When it comes to peer to peer I think ... there is a higher ... value than placed on more of those world views and the things that bunk mates that you know friends ... you are kind of living together ... and your relationship is not hierarchically hard wired ... so you have to kind of find your way you know ... teacher student versus the students in the class room ... there is a lot more going on ... and that student to student relationship ... even in ... I mean forget kids ... like in a university setting ... the relationship you have with the professor ... you know we don’t necessarily need to see eye to eye on everything but I need to feel that it’s gonna be fair ... honest ... integrity ... communications are good ... we might disagree on many things ... when it comes to ... in the class room ... these becomes your

more intimate ... you know just more intimate kind of relationships ... that has less structure to it ... and so you have to find connections through these worldviews beliefs politics ... philosophy ... whatever ... that might ... or similar cultural backgrounds.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“World views could be different ... yeah world views can be different ... maybe different among co-workers ... that need not necessarily be ... doesn’t mean that if you only share ... common world views will your fit with your co-workers be good ... I would tend not to agree with that ... if people share similar world views then ... that is good ... if they have different world views it is not necessarily a negative.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“Worldviews ... higher I think with colleagues ... than it is with supervisor or yeah ... for me because ... umm ... in my experience ... my colleagues who have ... who are indigenous I developed life-long friendships with ... whereas colleagues who are not indigenous it doesn’t mean that I didn’t get along with them or that I didn’t form good relationships ... they just haven’t been long lasting ... so there is something about the worldviews that is a colleague specific relationship for me ... umm.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

In summary, the data did not suggest that a particular dimension of person-group fit stood out for meaning *at work* (incidentally, developing person-group fit scale, in Study 2, took the most time). The interviewees mentioned alignment of values, commitment towards work, and getting along, as well as a match with the world views as being important.

Person-Organization Fit

Person-organization fit was measured with help of the dimensions of perceived match in the way things are done in the organization, organizational support, rewards, values related to work, abilities, culture, and reputation and purpose of the organization. The interviewees repeatedly

emphasized the importance of a match with the purpose of the organization in creating meaning *at* work:

“I think the most important thing for me is the purpose of the organization ... and feeling that like what they are doing is aligned with your values ... your own values ... I think that would be the most important among the ones you said”

“I am happy with ... the like ... with the purpose of the organization ... and I mean I guess I am probably proud to work there ... I think I am really critical ... so I will see issues as well and like I will mention those but umm in general I think like that the purpose of what the center does is like a good thing and its ultimately like helping people.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“Well ultimately purpose ... (*why?*) ... I think if you are working in an organization where you feel they have set a ... kind of a worthy aim for themselves ... regardless of what it is ... umm ... then you can just feel good about contributing your time ... to be there ... I think for anybody like time is the right ... precious thing so ... you know if you are in a place where you ... I think you are willing to put up with lot actually if you feel good about the overall work that’s being done or the goals of the organization ... umm ... yeah so I think those other things can be mediocre ... and still kind of ... umm ... yeah ... encouraging and motivating to be at ... if you have a good goal ... yeah.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“I think purpose ... because at the end of the day ... you get the big picture ... what the company is doing ... because ... everyone is doing ... you know if you don’t ... maybe I you are an accountant ... you can be an accountant in any company ... doesn’t make a big difference in being an accountant for ... I don’t know say ... say ... I don’t know ... some where you care about ... can be different for everyone ... as opposed to just being an accountant for any company ... and you don’t care what they do ... it’s hard to get behind your ... how to attach meaning to it.”

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

“Well purpose ... of course is gonna be key ... yeah ... purpose of the organization. Purpose would be number one ... (*why?*) ... it’s ahh ... because of where I am in my life cycle ... I want my efforts to be as meaningful as possible ... so if there is an important purpose ...

everything else sort of follows along right ... so if there was an important purpose ... let's just say ... there is a voluntary position that comes up ... and that position ... so it's voluntary ... but it takes a lot of time ... it is going to take a lot of my time ... I would then ... if I felt the purpose of the organization was so aligned to what I felt to the meaning in work that was aligned to my thoughts ... then I would check their values and reputation ... and I have been in a like this situation before ... in a not for profit work position ... where I actually resigned because of some problems in here ... the purpose was great ... the values and the reputation were ... didn't live up to the purpose."

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

"You wouldn't have taken the job in the first place if you did not believe in the purpose of the company."

- Information Technology Director, Financial Services

"Purpose ... now that match ... if the purpose matches ... everything else would fall into place."

- Coordinator, Public Sector

A few interviewees suggested that the match with the organizational culture, in the person-organization fit, were really important in creation of meaning *at* work:

"I would say work culture ... and I told you work culture itself has ... embodies itself the structure the way things are done in an organization ... this I am considering as a part and subset of work culture itself. I would rate these others to be lesser important than work culture itself being the directly influencing factor of ... ah ... meaning *at* work ... so I would rate that to be the highest ... that has a direct influence ... other things are having a remote or a very indirect connection with that ... meaning at work. I think the real meaning at work will come when the environment around me ... I find it more ... in the morning when I wake up I find ok ... lets ... this is a good new day ... let me go back to my workplace ... I think that is something which is ... which will come from the work culture."

- CFO, Packaging Industry

“I think the culture ... (*why?*) ... because an organization is a collection of people ... and I think you can try to identify values as (name of the organization removed) has values ... and you can create a structure and you can figure out the supports and the pillars as we have ... but those are ... they are not the people ... those are ... they are constructs ... whereas the culture ... you can support it ... you can and try to shape it ... but that is about the people and how they behave towards each other and their work ... and it’s interesting to think of them in terms of people ... on one hand and an organization ... which is not individual people.”

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

“I think in this thing reputation hardly matters but culture matters ... I think I would value culture ... what is the culture of the organization ... over the past history of the organization ... have they been known for doing the right thing ... if the organization known for doing the right thing ... that is what I look at ... most ... if they are doing the right thing ... culturally ... then the reputation is going to be high anyway ... so that reputation I am not really worried about because the culture drives the reputation and the values ... and I think all the other things will follow ... because what is their corporate culture ... I think ... what are the stand based on different things that they had to face ... like in the case of (organization name removed) ... we source from a lot of things ... are we sourcing ethically right ... are we paying a fair price ... and not driving farmers to death by trying to lower their prices.”

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

“To me the most important thing is ... hmm ... I almost like culture and then support ... yeah it will be between those two ... umm ... so ... so ... yeah ... value reputation ... it is good but it doesn’t mean ... I have a good job or a good organization ... I would say ... the culture ... culture is a ... kind of has a ... bigger ... you know ... meaning ... containing ... other stuff like a ... you know value ... support ... you know a little bit of purpose ... I am thinking that culture is actually ... good enough ... even though the company is not that famous I can go with that ... what I am trying to say is culture is almost including support ... structure ... hmm ... every company has a little bit different structure ... so every time I move ... I have to face different structure right ... so if you keep trying ... if I keep trying ... let’s say to find ... my perfect structure ... this is my only fit ... then I may not be satisfied ... and then value and reputation ... sometimes you have a good and a bad reputation right. Culture to me is very important ... because I am not worried about how to survive ... but I am talking about how actually this culture ... I mean can help me grow ... because if culture is not good enough ... too harsh ... not accepting any mistakes ... very hierarch(ical) ... top to bottom ... (*structure is also a reflection of the culture*) ... yes ... yes ... that’s right ... that’s right ... so what I am saying is more like you know ... you know ... accepting ... difference ... different ideas ... structure cannot sometimes have this kind of stuff ... cannot solve this problem ... the culture is like a mother right ... accepting ... right ... oh yeah ... my son ... is spoilt ... making always troubles ... but still my son ... is kind of culture ... so we go together ... kind of culture ... (*nice analogy*) ... but the structure is more like ... I

said you know ... very ... I mean ... structured ... it's like systematic ... right ... view ... but to me is like culture.”

- Accountant, Public Sector

A few other interviewees suggested that the match with the organizational values/way things are done were important in creation of meaning at work, while others thought that all the dimensions were important, while one also pointed at reputation:

“I think values would come in to play ... most strongly ... and I think ... when you are trying ... as like a new graduate ... when you are trying for jobs ... a lot of the companies talk about I need to fit and I think ... that's a very broad term obviously ... when they say fit I think a lot of them what they mean really is values ... and it's like are you someone who is able to get along with our current employees ... do you fit in with how things are done ... that will be how things are done I think ... values and ways of doing things stand out to me ... quite a bit.”

- Business Development Associate, Media

“Values ... any time ... if the values match ... everything else would fall into place.”

- Coordinator, Public Sector

“I like the reputation ... I think the people ... everybody likes to be associated with the winner ... so if you are part of an organization that's well regarded ... I mean the minute you are ... the minute the organization is in the news for something positive ... wow ... you feel ... I think it just boosts your sense of connection ... because you wanted to connect with something that's got a good reputation ... and quite the opposite when something goes wrong in your organization ... the last thing you wanna do when you ... you are hiding your head ... so I think that's quite a powerful piece there that's ... perhaps somewhat more superficial but I think it's quite important.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

“I think if an organization were to provide all of these ... then it’s actually ... would be a good fit with the organization and ... it would enhance the quality of work too.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“I can’t just leave any of these and they are all important.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“I think it’s really hard to untangle ... like ... the mission ... the values ... the goals ... for me they are all grouped together.”

- Academic 1, Public Sector

In summary, for meaning *at work* the match with regard to the purpose of the organization, especially if you were a member of the top management team, was important in person-organization fit. Other dimensions of person-organization fit that were emphasized by the interviewees were about the alignment with the organizational culture and values, and the way things were done. There were a few interviewees who insisted that all the dimensions of person-organization fit were important for meaning *at work*.

Meaning in Work

Meaning *in work* was represented by the dimensions of doing something important, serving a greater purpose, fulfilment, feeling connected to, and being able to be oneself while doing the work. The data made it abundantly clear that meaning *in work* is understood to exist predominantly when one is making a contribution, which could manifest in various ways (doing something important/serving a greater purpose/making a difference), as shown by the following quotes:

“When you are creating or building something ... I find it the most meaningful ... that also would include waste elimination because you know if you take out that waste you can invest that money somewhere else ... to build something else ... so it’s really around ... yeah ... the building phase of a business ... to me is the most meaningful ... I have also been in businesses where we were shrinking ... businesses ... I don’t like that ... I can do it ... but I like ... I like to see something grow ... I don’t like to trim organizations as much as I just like to say hey lets grow in a responsible way ... (*why is that so important to you?*) ... umm ... well because I think you can make a really positive difference ... in the world. I think empowering people who are specialists to do what they need to do to achieve the overall goal and acting as the integrator of across that team is one of privilege and so yeah ... I find that really really meaningful ... and then you also see ... when you have really empowered people to contribute you see them that’s really you know that’s how they get the most reward because if the work isn’t meaningful for me ... I hope I am making the work meaningful for everyone else around me ... right ... or contributing to the meaningful work of everyone else around me.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“When you have honored all your commitments and when you have been able to create wealth ... for not only yourself but all of your employees ... and when you see them do well ... you have that you have ... you sense that feeling of fulfilment.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“I mean I am very good in a reactive mode but I am especially good at ... planning for ... preparing for ... anticipating ... those issues ... sort of seeing ... the long view ... and seeing something I think emerging way in a distance ... and developing ... an approach ... a solution ... to how I see that playing out ... so that the organization is ... if you will ... I will say protected ... from the possibility of those things hitting us ... so I spend a lot of time sort of looking out ... at what’s going on in our environment ... with our ... the people that we serve ... the clients that we have ... the legislative environment ... the fiscal environment ... all of which could hit us at any time and if I am not watching out for those things ... many other people are as well ... but that’s where my work is most meaningful ... and then developing solutions for that ... with other people is particularly meaningful and you know joyful ... when I am working with other people ... on that kind of problem solving ... (*why?*) why is that ... yeah why ... well because I get ... everybody likes to feel they are contributing ... you know ... so that’s my way of thriving in my work ... that the work gives me challenge ... to exercise ... I like to say exercise an abundance of creativity ... and intellectual capacity ... so I can pour myself into it ... it ... it ... it’s got to be a little bit hard ... it’s not a lot hard to make it you know really meaningful ... particularly when the problems I am solving help the organization be better ... or feedback into a better workplace or whatever it might be.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“I find my work meaningful when ... I know that it is impacting other people in a positive way ... so the purpose of like the work itself and what it accomplishes and who it impacts ... I think is like ... if you know that it is helping people and you know it is having a positive impact on the community then that’s where its meaningful for me. We do research in ... umm ... it’s like knowledge translation umm ... it has like a very real and practical impact on like school communities and like in my case ... the work I do ... so knowing that its helping teachers and like kids and students ... you know like talk about ... like develop critical thinking ... which is kind of what we do ... is like super neat to know that ... part of what I do is like accomplishing that.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“I would say when I am appreciated ... not necessarily in terms of verbal appreciation ... when I feel that I am actually adding value to anything which I am doing ... when I feel that somebody is appreciating whatever I am doing ... not necessarily in terms of saying it loud ... but even in terms of gesture or even in terms of understanding or empathy showing ... I would say that is ... that is the best time when I feel that I am 100% engaged.”

- CFO, Packaging Industry

“I am primarily in a service position ... so for me I feel like I have done my job well when I am actually able to ... really help a person in and that gets reflected back to me or like ... lots of times you end up going through your day just doing what you normally do ... but it feels like ... it hits home a little bit more if somebody comes to you and they are actually like tell you like this made a difference.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“When do I find the work itself to be meaningful (*yeah*) when I am working on a task or a project that ahh ... is positively effecting multiple people in the organization ... umm ... you know ... if I am working on something that genuinely benefits my co-workers at the same time as myself ... I feel like I am part of something ... I feel like that’s ah ... that’s a rewarding experience.”

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

“That sort of like knowing that ... that I have made an impact or whatever ... like I am not just throwing stuff out in the void. Even if the work isn’t something that’s like super like ... glory or like you know ... huge in society or whatever ... I still really appreciate doing ... umm ... like ... like little stuff so long as I am still given that feedback like this is helpful to

us ... like this is useful to us ... like ... so I definitely meaningful become like knowing I am contributing to the organization ... or the larger group I guess.”

- Research and Design Assistant, Public Sector

“When it can make a difference ... when it contributes to something that can make a difference.”

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

“I mean if I had to pull out one it would be the work is important and serves a greater purpose ... because I think that’s what creates the fulfilment and the connection.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“When I am dealing with people and I can help them ... I think for me I am also helping person ... like I always like to help others ... and if I can make a difference in the life of the students ... I never say no if I know something is harder to achieve but I always look into seeing if there is other opportunities to make things happen or knowing that there are things ... you know that ... so I try to ... you know I am an enabler ... so if I can enable ... things to happen then I think ... that’s kind of rewarding ... right ... like to be able to make a difference right ... and to make it better.”

- Administration Staff 3, Public Sector

“Meaningful in the sense that it’s meaningful that I am ... a spoke in this huge (organization name removed) wheel and I feel that what I do is contributing to running this well-oiled business ... if I don’t do what I do then something is going to break in that huge chain of events and destabilize the company ... even though what I am doing at a larger scale would be insignificant. It’s a sense of contribution ... that I feel proud that when somebody buys something from the (organization name removed) store which is our end goal to get people to buy stuff from our stores ... that I have ... I feel that hey they wouldn’t be able to do this if I had not done my part ... whatever little part I am doing. Before I worked here ... I was working in an IT consultant ... and I had no clue what I was doing ... and I just worked ... software and I had no clue how it was going to be used but now ... I am part of the whole ... so it is much more meaningful. “The work itself is small right ... but it is fulfilling because ... I know it is a part of a bigger process ... so let’s say like in building of the Taj Mahal ... maybe there were like hundreds of masons ... if there was a mason who built the foundation and he would ... he was really happy that what he was doing to ultimately create the Taj Mahal ... that fulfilment is what I am talking about ... I may be that one mason who laid a few bricks or whatever and because of that somebody else ... could put in the other thing(s) and at the end of it all it became a Taj Mahal ... I can say hey you know what you see that

Taj Mahal over there ... I did that twenty bricks ... over there ... right ... so that is my fulfilment.””

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

“I think it’s kind of like that classic ... I mean this research called flow (*Csikszentmihalyi*) yeah Csikszentmihalyi ... and it’s being ... I find the work the most rewarding when it’s difficult ... you know difficult enough ... that it’s challenging but not too difficult that I can’t do it ... umm ... and again ... I gain great satisfaction when I feel like I can grow or learn something new ... or become ... just feel like I have gained something from it and that gives me meaning ... so ... umm ... so ... yeah ... the meaning comes from that process ... of being able to grow and develop ... (*why?*) ... umm ... yeah ... umm ... I think that in a lot of ways ... it’s the value that I carry around the whys are from my culture ... umm ... and so that is the answer for the why ... so a lot of that kind of thinking comes from the acknowledgement that ... we come from ... we come from lines of genealogy ... we come from lines of knowledge actually that it’s our responsibility ... to learn so that we can teach ... and its always about the next generation and recognizing that I ... to somebody else I was that next generation ... and so ... it is sort of an act of ... it’s like the realization of being grateful ... so if you are grateful to the people who helped nurture you to become the person who you are ... then it necessarily means that you should do the same for the next generation ... and that that is part of the ... that’s the point of life ... is to be able to keep ... growing and to keep nurturing ... each other and the ... these new generation and umm ... yeah ... so I mean if ... the nature of my work is about understanding these values and the knowledge within my culture ... then that’s what I am going to be contributing through my calling and passion.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

“Our main function is to provide advisory services ... comments or whatever right ... to make their life better ... so in order to do that we need to find their problems ... and then we find ... you know provide our advisory ... it’s not so much about ... checking the list ... no ... so that is meaningful to me ... so if you know ... kind of coincides with my idea to making others ... you know like ... happier ... and also seeing them ... they are satisfied with our service ... of course it matches to me ... so that’s what is meaningful to me.”

- Accountant, Public Sector

A few interviewees narrowed in on being able to be authentic and suggested that being able to be their own true self mattered the most to them for meaning *in* work:

“This is the key word ... authenticity ... ok ... and that’s when I counsel young people ... I talk to them about the importance of authenticity ... because I don’t think they necessarily ... umm ... you know sometimes I think that it’s not so evident for them. To me I think authenticity is the most umm ... it’s an interesting triangle right ... does it serve a greater purpose though I think honestly often we don’t know if it serves a greater purpose ... in the grand scheme of things ... if we stopped doing what we were doing ... what the ... would the world stop ... I think authenticity is the starting point ... I think I would ... rank that as number one. When you have a disconnect between authenticity and the work then you will probably find that the person will end up with mental health issues ... and I have seen it over and over again ... and burnouts and all kinds of things problems but ... and it’s really hard to define what does it mean to be authentic ... it’s ... it’s ... really there is no ... I don’t know if there is science behind that but I think that it is ... there must be something to do with alignment between you and your ... ah ... how do I describe it ... so ... your talent ... I am just trying to ... you have just asked me ... I have never ... you are taking me to an interesting point so ... thank you ... but I want to sort it down here as a foundation ... but then you have ... and these are ... competencies ... the hard and soft technical one whatever right ... again there is your spirit ... your spirit ... and your soul and they may be they are the same thing I am not quite sure ... but basically ... and there may be other aspects as well ... but I think if you align these things (talent, spirit, soul) you generate ... you have a sense of fulfilment or happiness you know ... I don’t know ... or happiness you know ... and if it’s misaligned people get sick ... whatever you call it ... mental health ... burnout”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“If you are not a naturally congenial and person loving person ... you don’t like interacting with people and smile at them ... then you would not be able to do that job (receptionist) for long because ... I would not be able to do that because that’s not my authentic self.”

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

In summary, the data indicated that the understanding of meaning *in* work was quite clear and similar across the diverse set of interviewees and reflected doing something important/serving a greater purpose/making a difference. The underlying pro-social and altruistic nature, referred to in my theorizing (Chapter 3), driving meaning *in* work came across from the responses of the interviewees. The dimension of authenticity was also emphasized (this is in contrast to the data in Study 2, which suggested a weak factor loading for the authenticity related item) by the interviewees.

Meaning at Work

The dimensions representing meaning *at* work were the degree to which one is able to cherish the work environment, be authentic at work, feel connected to, a belonging to and a part of the organization, draw fulfilment from it, and think that the organization serves a greater purpose. Here the relative importance of the dimensions were not as clear as was the case with meaning *in* work. Also the data from Study 3 indicated that the feelings of community/harmony is perhaps another important dimension of meaning *at* work. Many interviewees emphasized the aspects of creating a work environment that one would cherish and feel connected and belonging to:

“I think the workplace itself ... the physical place ... the experience at work ... this room ... this building ... this structure ... when a person has more say and control ... in that ... I think its ... that’s when a workplace ... the physical place can be really ... powerfully positive. When people are given more choice more control more empowerment I think they are just in a better headspace to contribute ... so the why is that they are able ... to be more productive ... not in terms of number of wages ... more creative more innovative ... they have more room in their head ... to just explore the possibilities ... than spend time anxious frustrated about (*unproductive*) yeah ... now that’s a ... once again it’s very self-reflective because ... there are I am sure many people in this organization where ... that enjoy the routine ... enjoy the rigor ... they want the instructions ... they want the guidance ... they don’t ... my gosh! Last thing they want is to come to work and choose where to sit down. I just want people to be ... to have ... to create space to be their best selves ... and for some people that’s rigor ... rigidity ... structure ... for some people that’s not.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“What I find important in the environment ... the working environment is ... I like to see ... I would like to be very mobile ... so every day ... I walk ... everyday ... for many many years ... whether I worked in a factory ... whether I worked in a department ... whether I worked in a bigger office ... even my most ... my role before as head of the HR ... I would walk the entire workplace in the morning to say hello to people ... to smile at them .. have a eye contact ... get to know them ... umm ... I like people to be engaged ... and I think to allow for engagement you need to let them know that ... you love them ... to the extent ... I am using love in a broader way that is ... I believe in you ... I want to achieve your full potential ... I care about you ... not just as an employee but as a person ... I wanna know what your support network is like ... you know if you have got kids ... how old are your

kids ... you know and ... you know if they are sick I wanna know how they are ... I like a caring environment ... I also like an energetic and passionate environment.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“I guess I find the team environment meaningful ... if I enjoy being there ... I am having a hard time putting words together ... I used to work for the ... office ... same area of town ... just a block away ... somewhat similar ... but ... no art on the walls ... no colors ... no music in the break room ... anything like that ... whereas here there is lots of paintings on the walls ... there is ah ... tables ... billiard room ... people are up and talking ... moving around and interacting ... instead of just at their desk and talking over Skype ... so I don't know ... it's the dynamic ... interact ... that makes the work environment meaningful for me ... I like a social workplace.”

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

“I think when I interact with other people and there is a ... some synergy (why?) ... I think we can do more together than any one of us can do alone ... umm ... I like working by myself ... I am way over at the I end of the introvert scale ... so I am very happy by myself but umm ... to make things meaningful it has to go beyond me ... and I think the more brains we have working on things the more things spark and the more ideas get generated and more ... the more we can actually do ... or where we can reach.”

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

“So at the end of the day ... we are social animals ... we ... you don't want to go to a place where you are not able to engage with people around you ... so to ... umm ... create a work environment where there are likeminded people ... who ... umm ... think like you and ... who ... with whom you can have a meaningful ... intellectually stimulating conversations and exchange of ideas ... and that is something that ah ... umm ... is ... very meaningful from the work environment stand point as well.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“Work environment is meaningful when people feel that they are business partners or they are in it ... not only for themselves ... for the others right.”

- Information Technology Director, Financial Services

A few interviewees considered work environments meaningful when there was an effort to make them feel a part of the organization:

“Matter of being accepted right ... for the work you do ... it’s not recognition per se ... but being accepted ... into ... coming into a new team ... and people beginning to trust you ... and not question you ... so I think that is a big piece of that ... where you come in as an outsider ... and how quickly can you become an insider ... right ... so for me ... that’s a big thing ... if an organization will create the environment for that transition to be seamless ... that would be great ... but if an organization or the people do not make that process easy ... then of course it is ... what you were talking about that autocorrelation ... it sows the seeds of something that could go in a downhill direction and not necessarily in an uphill direction ... right.”

- Coordinator, Public Sector

“I think umm ... having a good relationship with your boss is like really important and makes ... feeling that ... feeling that like the person you work for is not just a person you work for and a boss but it’s somebody you work with ... I think makes it meaningful ... because I think you don’t feel like ... they are just like higher up and ... I mean they can be but if you feel like just ... they value you and you feel like the relationship is on equal grounds ... like I feel like that makes it meaningful.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“I find when the people around me are completely aligned to the overall strategic objectives of the organization and everyone is working in kind of in sync ... everyone appreciates his position in the organization ... I feel that is when we can call that it is 100% ... everyone is completely engaged.”

- CFO, Packaging Industry

“It’s just making sure that ... you know people are actually working together ... and not ... you know ... we all have sort of a common goal ... umm ... but it feels really good when it’s ... everybody is kind of cohesive ... with how to get there ... and they are willing to make that happen ... and yeah ... I think even in places where you all have a common goal ... but you all are trying to do it in a different way ... that’s when you get into situations where it feels like you are wasting your time ... where it’s not necessarily you know the right fit ... so primarily with my co-workers or supervisors ... it’s about ... (interesting that you brought up fit .. we will be discussing it later) ... yeah they are connected ... umm ... especially given ... yeah ... I have been in places where everybody really cares about the goals of the organization but if they are not ... if they don’t have similar working styles and

they can't get past that ... then it doesn't make ... again that doesn't work out for very well ... I think that's been a big difference ... umm ... now like working in places ... where you have the opposite experience ... where you work in kind of similar ways ... or you are working in ways that are compatible or support each other in how you work ... umm ... that can contribute to meaningfulness at work."

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

"The work environment ... I guess ... umm ... it's when your input is valued ... umm ... that it's kind of maybe appreciated ... that you ... feel that you have a say ... umm ... communication is clear."

- Administration Staff 3, Public Sector

A few interviewees expressed meaning *at* work as emanating from the impact that the organization has on the larger society:

"Work environment to be meaningful when ... umm ... when they are able to enhance the scope and scale of things that we do then ... you have the sense of satisfaction that you have created something which is tangible and beneficial to a large number of people ... rightly or wrongly ... we have always felt a sense of satisfaction in knowing that we have touched the lives of many thousands of people ... so anyway that might not ... that need not be a yardstick for success ... but to be able to do things that are larger scale where you have been able to meaningfully contribute or transform the lives of many people and that's something that you consider meaningful from a work standpoint."

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

"I guess I definitely find ... you know ... it's definitely nice ... like to be in an organization that I feel like ... sort of ... like ... here for like the greater good ... like doing ... good stuff for people ... like what ... you know ... like a private company that does ... good stuff for people ... or like ... or like the university or whatever ... definitely there is that element of like knowing that ... whatever like the purpose of the organization is ... in line with like ... like what ... how I want to like bring my presence into the world."

- Research and Design Assistant, Public Sector

A few interviewees suggested that being able to be their true self was most important to them for meaning *at* work:

“For that matter even this afternoon we were discussing in some other context group think ... where the discussion in the room they might disagree with what is being discussed but they have suppressed themselves because they feel that they would be singled out for being different ... so group think is a serious issue in many firms which is why many companies encourage to be ... they appoint a dissenter ... in a group ... just so that ... there is somebody who is able to take an alternate standpoint ... and not just simply ... go along with the flow ... it’s true so I think that ... that is important as well ... it is important for organizations to create an environment where people are able to express themselves freely ... in which case they can be more authentic ... so you know that is ... something that’s the responsibility of the organization as well.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“We can be ourselves at our work that is more important to me ... nobody should ahh ... try to mold me into somebody else right ... give me the freedom to be what I am ... and I can do stuff for you. If somebody stifles me by making me somebody I am not ... let’s say I love to wear jeans right ... and then they say you cannot be wearing jeans ... like a tie and suit like back in (organization name removed) ... I did that for eight years ... I know places there are dress codes ... fortunately we don’t ... I love that ... because it gives me the chance to be myself right ... I love to wear these jeans ... to work ... and my ... informal shoes and casual wear and then ... I have no problems with that ... they give me the chance to be myself ... if I was not working ... if I had no need to work this is what I would wear ... I think for me that is most important.”

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

“Hmm ... that’s interesting ... because now I would like to say ... so being myself at work is really important ... so that’s number one.”

- Academic 2, Public Sector

In summary, the data did not indicate a clear consensus on which dimensions of meaning *at* work mattered more. A work environment that one would cherish, feel connected to, belonging towards and in which one was able to be authentic were all discussed. One aspect of meaning *at*

work that I heard from the interviewees, somewhat related to feeling connected but missing from the dimensions in Study 2, is that of a feeling of community/harmony at the workplace.

Meaning in and at Work

The second objective of Study 3 was to find out why meaning *at* work matters so much more than meaning *in* work for an organization to be rated a *great place to work*. One insight from the data is that meaning *at* work creates a work environment which supports meaning *in* work. In a way it suggests that meaning *at* work is a precursor to/prerequisite for meaning *in* work:

“If you have meaning at work ... you create the environment to enable ... to better enable the meaning in your work ... so it’s like the hygiene factor ... you need to have a structure, a pay level, and a reporting relationship, a team, a physical place, all of which enable you to then have meaning in your work ... so I would suggest that it’s probably harder anyway to have meaning in your work ... until and unless ... the meaning at work exists ... once you have meaning at work ... it becomes invisible ... it’s just ... it’s like the air we breathe ... you don’t notice it but ... you would notice it if you have got ... bad or particularly toxic ... like a work environment and then suddenly o my goodness ... all of my meaning in my work is being sucked out because my work environment is suddenly toxic ... so I think one is a prerequisite to the other.”

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

“They (*meaning in and at work*) are both important ... but I would have to say work environment ... because if you love the work you do but you go in to a workplace where the environment is toxic I think that it’s really hard to operate ... in that setting. I have known that people working for organizations where they might have enjoyed the work but perhaps they didn’t have a good relationship with their boss or like they felt ... sometimes some people feel like really surveilled by their boss ... like they are being watched over ... and even if you enjoy the work ... you feel like everyone is always looking over your shoulder ... then it’s like you don’t like enjoy ... like I know some of those people ... they liked to work ... they didn’t enjoy going to work ... and ... and eventually they don’t want to work there any more if you feel like it’s not a happy place to be.”

- Research Assistant, Public Sector

“But if you get a lot of meaning *in* work ... but you are not being supported at work or your ... at work isn't allowing for other aspects of your life or whole ... you know then it doesn't work either.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“I think the work environment can influence people's mindset ... in the way they approach work ... and I also think it can affect how people work together in a team environment too ... so if the work environment is healthy and social and people are comfortable and enjoying themselves ... then I think that directly impacts how well they work together ... the work itself ... as well as you know problem solving and when issues do arise.”

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

“The work environment ... is able to bring out the best in people.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“I think meaning in work is a higher order ... it's a higher ... it's harder and higher ... order of achievement ... so it's more important ... but in the absence of the meaning at work ... the social experience ... the sense of joy physically at work ... it makes meaning in work harder to achieve ... so you know it's like a ... you can never ... lose sight of the little things ... I will give you a brilliant example ... started here ... this is nine years ago ... there were in various floors in our larger building ... there were water clubs ... so what's a water club ... and people were collecting money from each other ... to contribute to have a water ... you know those big jugs of water ... with the water guy coming ... staff were contributing their own money ... for drinking water ... now ... the organization said we have tap water available ... there is kitchen nooks everywhere ... that's your water supply ... but staff didn't like it ... it's tap water ... they like the more purified water ... and so they decided to create these water clubs ... and contributed a dollar or two a month ... and they got these big jugs delivered ... and for me watching that happen ... an organization of our size ... that we couldn't provide people with real or otherwise better water ... forget ... I don't know if it's better ... I don't care if it's better but for them it was better ... and it created ... it ... it ... created a better work place ... what it did ... was it took away an annoyance ... so ... it just made ... I was ... I was ... you know it took me a while actually ... it was quite a bit of a culture change ... do we ... are we really going to pay for this water service for ourselves for our staff and all that ... because you know it meant money ... and for me that was ... those were ... that's an example of ... to me a hygiene factor ... but when it exists no one even thinks about it ... but when it doesn't exist ... people think about it ... I have to remember to bring my two dollars in ... and I got to pay (name removed) ... someone's got to call the water guy ... like it became an annoyance ... so I think that there is something about ... I think that there are prerequisites ... I think that there are ... fundamentals that ... until and unless they are in place ... at a very basic physical level ... the meaning in work

... becomes very difficult ... if you have a toxic boss ... if you got you know ... difficult ... abusive workmates ... if you have physical space that's not healthy or conducive ... if the air quality or the water ... all these things ... think ... not to mention structure ... and how work is assigned to you ... how ... what processes ... what technology ... you have like the whole experience of the ... of your physical being at work ... I think unless those ... we call those enablement factors ... you know unless they are in place ... I think it becomes very hard to find meaning in your work ... if you are worried everyday ... about ... basic needs ... it's no different than broader societal issues ... there are societies in our ... you know ... people ... it's hard to become self ... become self-actualized as a society when you are fighting a war ... or searching for water ... obviously ... so ... I think it's the same in organizations ... obviously these are more first world problems ... but to the extent that there are annoyances ... where you park your car ... are you late to work ... what's the traffic like ... I think there is a whole ... I think there is a whole meaning at work ... thing that your ... that you are uncovering ... which I believe is a prerequisite ... for the meaning in work."

- Top Management Team Member, Public Sector

"I would ... that has more to do with how the work place is an extension of like people's lives and if your work place is bad ... or if you have bad and poor relationships at work ... that people take that into their daily ... into their normal lives outside so ... the meaning in work ... it comes quite secondary ... as something people think about ... because I mean that has a lot to do with I think with how you absorb that energy ... that between people ... so ... if you perceive that people don't like you at work ... whether or not they do or they don't it's irrelevant ... but you perceive that ... then you take that home ... you also ... you know bring that into your other relationships with family and friends ... and you might articulate that and express that ... and talk about how ... oh my colleague is this that and everything ... complaining and that kind of stuff ... so I can definitely see why that would be a high priority ... because it can have such wide ranging effects on the rest of your life."

- Academic 2, Public Sector

Another insight from the data is that unlike meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work is more externally driven and difficult to gain/change, especially in larger organizations, and hence it matters more to the employee that the environment is meaningful:

“I think that there are times when I felt that the meaning in work and the meaning at work ... were misaligned and that caused frustration for me ... and that does happen often because as a globally managed business ... you are not always in control of everything and you don’t know how to influence the stakeholders to get there.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“I come from smaller organizations ... so community work that I have done in smaller groups can often feel more rewarding because you are sort of directly connected to all aspects of the organization and what you are trying to do and can kind of directly feel the impacts of all of those things ... in a larger organization like this ... umm ... it’s a little harder to feel so connected to the overarching ... you know (organization name removed) for example ... I have almost no personal feelings towards it ... it’s more big and ... the department I can feel a bit more connected to because that’s in ... like I have a interaction with them more regularly and so it’s easier for me to connect the things that give me meaning *in* work to *at* work when it’s in the smaller context.”

- Administration Staff 2, Public Sector

“I think there are ways around it (low meaning *in* work)... and you could also get ... like I feel like here at (organization name removed) we could always get support you know to do something ... either if you didn’t know how to do it well ... I could say it was in Excel ... like you had to do a lot of work in Excel and you weren’t comfortable in Excel ... then you could get training to do it ... or get someone to help you with it or whatever ... so at work if it was ... you know there would be ways ... because I think the environment would support ... gaps ... right ... yeah ... so whether or not ... if I was in a dark room in a corner ... it’s hard to fix ... you know I mean hopefully though there could be ways around that ... like ... perhaps ... if there was a way to ... say may be I work from home or something that you are not stuck in this uninspiring environment ... where you are you know or something that is not right ... because there is ways to fix that but there is not ways to fix the environment ... it’s not as easy to fix the environment ... it is more of a culture thing ... it’s more the people that are making those decisions.”

- Administration Staff 3, Public Sector

“They may be at positions where they cannot change or they will not want to change the environment.”

- Information Technology Director, Financial Services

There were several interviewees who stated that in a *great place to work* meaning *in* work was more important to them or both the meaning *in* and *at* work were important. When I shared with them that my second Study indicates otherwise, and asked them what the reason for this could be, interesting insights were offered such as it is a generational or a cultural thing, or that it depends on where you are in your career, or your situation in life, or your spirituality quotient, or your personality, or your role in an organization:

“I think the difference maybe is also in how different generations look at it ... I mean when I was growing up ... we were always taught ... that there was great meaning in work ... it’s a way of ... it’s an expression of yourself ... but it is also honorable ... whether you are picking up poop in a stable or you are putting toilet rolls over there ... or you are taking someone to the doctors ... someone who is old or ... changing diapers or whatever you know ... work is ... tends to be very task related ... and there is ... it’s a kind of ... for me it’s a ... a kind of validation ... that you are alive and that you are ... you know you are contributing something ... to something ... and so for me I don’t disassociate ... I disassociate a little bit ... to me meaning *in* work is broader and a lot philosophical ... and meaning *at* work is one aspect ... of this broader more philosophical approach ... in my mind anyway ... which I think is interesting as I start to spend less time at work ... but I spend more time in work ... in the meaning in work doing things that I want to do more you know so ... as this is an interesting thing but I am not sure.”

- Top Management Team Member 1, Multinational Corporation

“Women who are ... who have young children to care for ... if they are able to bring their children to work then that certainly enhances ... it’s a conducive work environment for them because they are able to tend to their young ones as well as do their work ... and that enhances the quality of work right.”

- Top Management Team Member 2, Multinational Corporation

“But I can probably understand and interpret why overwhelming data is in favor of meaning *at* work ... because metaphorically that is something which is very easily seen ... and quantifiable ... and meaning *in* work is something which is very intangible ... so it is very hard to define and ... hard to find out ... people will associate good work environment, good workplace, good food, good working hours, good ... and these all things probably people will associate with meaning *at* work and or even good colleagues also for that matter ... ah ... but meaning *in* work is something very ... a deeper ... it has a very kind of a hmm ... I would say to extent spiritual connotation and ah ... so that is why ... because it is difficult

to understand ... therefore people ... generally people will find it very difficult to associate ... so ... but I feel both of them have an effect ... you can't ... although meaning *at* work ... and now probably after having spoken few words probably I would rate meaning *in* work to be far higher than meaning *at* work. See I feel for younger employees meaning *at* work actually is important and but as you grow higher or as you grow senior may be you can link this to your research data in terms of age profiles also ... hmm ... before ... and I would go back to the basic ... basics of Maslow's need hierarchy and all that but once you are done with all the designations or all these ... once you have reached the pinnacle of your kind of organization hierarchies ... unless you have meaning *in* work it becomes a very monotonous and a routine job ... so ... so because then whether I have a bigger cabin, whether I have so much of people to report, whether I am sitting in an air conditioned environment or not ... when you have seen all this ... these things probably have lesser value than actually meaning *in* work ... the larger satisfaction comes from whether what you are doing is actually making some value or adding some value to the organization or the work or if not to both at least to your own self ... that is why I would classify probably more than the meaning *at* work the meaning *in* work although I am still saying these things also have impact ... of I am surrounded by good people, if I am surrounding ... surrounded by intelligent people obviously I will also try to strive to be like them but ... and vice versa also ... for example I am surrounded by ... either my boss or my colleagues who are actually not on the same intellectual wave length or then it has an effect even on me making a dull person or like ... so it has impact but the deeper sense comes from your self-actualization only."

- CFO, Packaging Industry

"I think in the long run it comes down to work itself ... yeah ... umm ... I just think young people ... are focused on the work environment ... and I think once you have actually made a career out of something ... it doesn't matter what you do."

- Media Coordinator, Marketing

"It's a very philosophical difference and my ... I would say ... I mean ... it's kind of late to start collecting this ... look at who is an introvert and who is an extrovert ... who needs to be around other people to feel that."

- Administration Staff 1, Public Sector

"Depends on the role ... so for example, as the ... umm ... head of Marketing or Branding if I am like the face of the company then I think meaning *in* work would actually be most important because that's when I am out in front of the world to see ... I mean this is my legacy ... it is my representation of company ... yes ... if I put that out then everything else falls in place ... the meaning *at* work will be better because of that ... as long as that's doing well ... for example, as a backend programmer or if you are a computer scientist when you are not on the front end side of the company and making ... when you are sort of back in the

trenches and company A or company B or company C ... it's very similar ... then I think meaning in work becomes a lot more probable ... sorry the meaning at work ... the meaning at work ... like the environment ... because that will say whether you want to work at A, B or C because it's the people around you ... it's the environment that you are in ... and it's not the work you deliver because that's fairly similar."

- Business Development Associate, Media

"And I think you know ... like you would find a distinction between ... let's say the work of a secretary ... that she can't take home ... she depends more on the environment ... hopefully provide some satisfaction ... for the work because ... probably she doesn't ... hardly find meaningfulness in the work itself ... right ... or maybe she would find ... meaningfulness in being able to access Facebook while she is doing her work ... something like this ... so ... you know ... I would just say depending on the kind of job you have ... would find it more meaningful ... you would find meaning more in the people you are attached to ... during your work than to the work itself."

- Academic 1, Public Sector

"So if you have a knowledge based job I think ... people do knowledge based job for the love of the job ... if it's not a knowledge based job ... then there is not much of a difference if you are a cashier in a bank or you are an office administrator or doing something else where it's not knowledge based but it's just ... I wouldn't call it blue collar but it's still something that as a human being anybody could do that job ... you don't have to have special skills ... I think may be that could be the reason ... depending on who answered the question ... right. I will be surprised why it would be *at* work ... be more ... because to me it's the love of the job that's ahh ... makes me come to (organization name removed) ... the work ... I just love to do what I do ... and I think that's what it should be in my opinion ... I don't know maybe it's the Asian Indian philosophy that is subconsciously guiding me or not ... I don't know ... maybe the Western concept of things ... is certainly a little bit different ... but to me and my upbringing and my background ... and my subconscious guiding me ... I am thinking ... and the example that I gave ... if I do not like to do what I do ... then you may provide me with all the things at work but deep inside in the bottom of my belt it is my desire to get my job done."

- Assistant Analyst, Retail Sector

"Isn't there a cultural aspect ... (*if you can just elaborate*) ... ok ... so ... let's just look at the cultures ... you and I come from ... and when we look at our parents and all ... for them ... work was something that was life right ... and they set up example ... it wasn't just a means of earning and living ... it was a way of life ... and that's what everything else revolves around ... there are cons of that too ... like ahh ... for not having the time for the dads to build up a relationship with their children ... but the cultural aspect that is very ...

very strong ... work in the North American context versus how work is viewed in other places is an entirely different construct ... right ... so that's why the cultural aspects sounded straight to me."

- Coordinator, Public Sector

"(Most of the Main Survey participants are from the US) ... Ahhh ... maybe that's why ... maybe ... because that's how I was taught from my family ... like from my dad ... my dad always told me in order to be recognized by others ... in order to be appreciated by others ... you must be ... do well first ... in order for others to appreciate ... for what you are doing ... that's what I was taught by family ... and that's how I was raised ... so I don't if ... in my mind always I think that I have to do well in order to ... appreciate ... that's interesting ... (so you are saying it is a cultural thing? ... because we got the data from the US) ... I think so ... because my fiancée ... he is also from the same culture and that's how he thinks too ... he is working for aircraft company ... he is an engineer ... but then he also thinks the same way as I do ... he also works really hard ... he is Korean."

- Administration Assistant, Trading

In summary, the interviewees offered several profound insights about the dynamics between meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, and why, as indicated in Study 2, meaning *at* work is so important for employees' perception of a *great place to work*. A few suggested that meaning *in* work was embedded within meaning *at* work, and hence, it was a precursor to/prerequisite for meaning *in* work, and in this sense more important. Others thought that the differences in the importance of meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work stemmed from the differences in the salience attached to work among diverse societal cultures, age groups/generations, career/life situations, roles in an organization, and personalities. In sum, Study 3 offered a deeper understanding into the fit perspective and into the mechanisms of meaning *in* and *at* work. It highlighted with finer granularity the relationships between the different kinds of fit and meaning *in* and *at* work, and provided a glimpse into a range of moderators in the dynamics between meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, extending the research horizon.

Chapter 8: Discussion

In this chapter I commence with a broad discussion overview, followed by specific discussions on the theoretical and empirical contributions of the dissertation, and the managerial implications. I conclude this chapter with a discussion on the limitations of the dissertation and the future research agenda.

Discussion Overview

In this dissertation, I proposed and tested a framework, the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. The dissertation contributes to Positive Organizational Scholarship, to the literature on pro-social aspects of work and organizations, and to the literature on *great places to work*. In the field of Positive Organizational Scholarship, this dissertation extends, elucidates, and provides structure and empirical validity to Pratt and Ashforth's (2003) suggestion that fit and similar constructs may foster meaningfulness. The fit perspective was a plausible yet hitherto unexamined source of meaning *in* and *at* work (Hansen, 2013). That positive meaning *in* and *at* work are motivational tools (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003) is powerfully demonstrated by the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. The model also extends the theoretical framework for pathways to meaningful work (please see Figure 8.1) proposed by Rosso et al. (2010). While the pathways to meaningful work (Rosso et al., 2010) describes various ways in which meaning may be forged, the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* offers empirically validated framework which sheds light on the antecedents, the mediators, and the outcome. This dissertation also extends the literature on the pro-social dimension of work and organizations (e.g., Steenkamp & Basson, 2013; Elangovan et al., 2010; Grant et al., 2008; Margolis & Walsh, 2003) by demonstrating how important it is for us to experience meaning *in* and *at* work, by feeling that our work at the place we work has a deeper purpose and serves a greater cause.

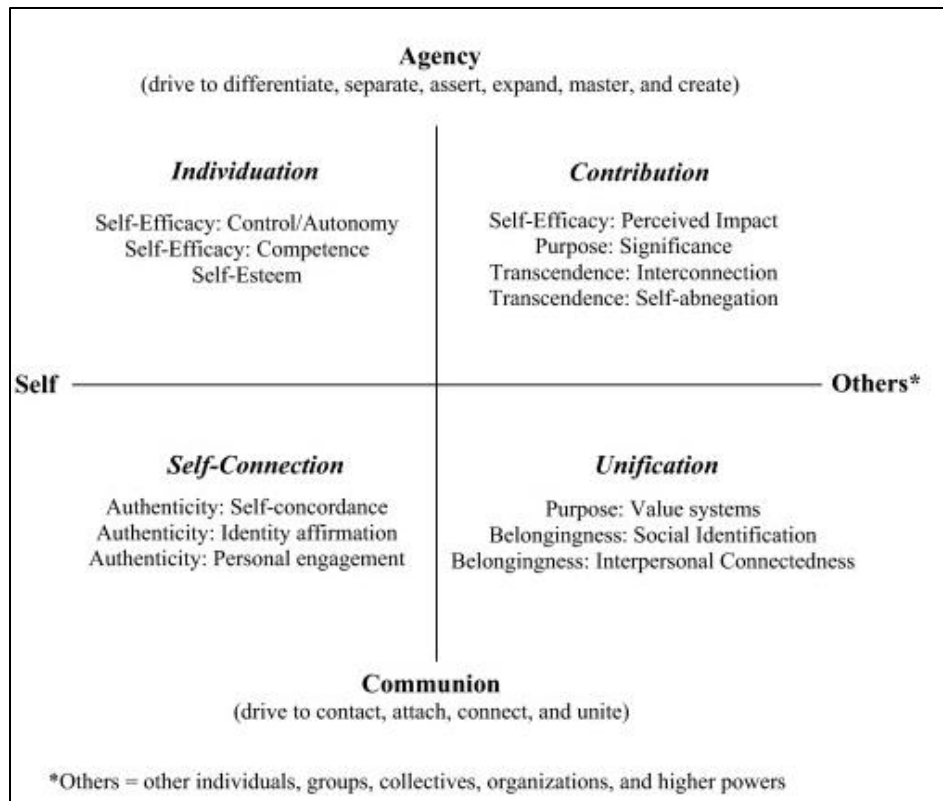


Figure 8.1: Four major pathways to meaningful work: a theoretical framework (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 114).

This dissertation examines the question when do employees perceive an organization to be a *great place to work* and fills the two critical gaps in the *great places to work* literature. The first critical gap is the one-size fits all approach which is problematic considering the differences between individuals in how they respond to the same factor or stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), the varying ways in which an individual makes sense of the same factor or stimuli over a period of time (Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999), and the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001). The second critical gap is that the literature does not account for the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255), or *why* the enumerated factors make an organization a *great place to work* (Park, Song, Kim & Lim, 2015; Zorn, Roper & Richardson, 2014; McCord, 2014). In other words, the applicability of the existing studies is limited because it is problematic to

“cherry pick” and generalize factors without understanding whether the prescribed factors are relevant for a particular employee situated in a particular organization and if so *why* (please see the section on significance of the research in Chapter 1 for a discussion on why it is critical to address these gaps). I address these two gaps through the fit perspective and the mechanism of meaning *in* and *at* work.

The fit perspective, that is, the perceived person-work, person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fits, provides an alternate, systematic and theoretically-supported framework for understanding when employees perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*. It is a framework that allows for within and across organization diversity, and avoids the shortcomings of one-size fits all approach. The mechanisms of meaning *in* and *at* work, or a feeling that our work at the place we work is aligned with who we are and where we belong, and has a deeper purpose and serves a greater cause, provides clues as to the “*causal core*” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255) of when an employee perceives an organization to be a *great place to work*. In the sub-sections to follow, I discuss the theoretical and the empirical contributions, and the managerial implications of the dissertation.

Theoretical Contributions

The dissertation makes several theoretical contributions. First, the dissertation provides a generic theory of a *great place to work*, the *meaning-through-fit* model, which helps to describe, explain, predict and prescribe employees’ perception of a *great place to work*. The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* suggests that the employees’ perception of a *great place to work* is built and sustained by meaning *in* work based on the underlying person-work fit, and meaning *at* work based on the underlying person-supervisor, the person-group, and the person-organization fits. The model provides a layered yet simple framework, making a distinction

between our relationship with our work and our work environment, and the fit and the meaning thereof. The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* acknowledges that each one of us is unique and may have different expectations from and understanding of a *great place to work*. Pride, trust and camaraderie, the three dimensions suggested by the Great Places to Work Institute, may work for some employees, to whom those are important, but not for others. The fit perspective side steps such shortcomings, and increases the generalizability, the applicability, and the usefulness of the *meaning-through-fit model of great place to work*. The model subsumes the multiplicity of factors suggested by the current literature on *great places to work* and provides a framework to select and stack those factors, using the fit perspective.

Second, this dissertation helps us to understand the role of meaning in our lives. Studies 1, 2 and 3, clearly demonstrate that meaning *in* and *at* work make a difference in the way we perceive our workplace. While the understanding of meaning *at* work varies, Study 3 seems to strongly suggest that meaning *in* work exists when one is making a contribution, which could manifest in various ways (doing something important/serving a greater purpose/making a difference). This yearning to make a contribution is perhaps linked to our altruistic (Piliavin & Charng, 1990) and prosocial (Grant, 2007) nature. This commonly understood reference point for meaning *in* work, if widely recognized as a core of our being, can have significant ramifications. Leaders who would like to emphasize the meaning *in* their work to respective employees will need to explain the contribution made (doing something important/serving a greater purpose/making a difference) by the employee in their work. This highlights that leaders need to engage in sense-giving, which in turn means that the leaders themselves need to reflect on this aspect. Such reflections are around questions like why do the employees do what they do and in aggregate leads to questions around the purpose of an organization.

Third, the data from the three studies clearly indicate that the importance of meaning *in* and *at* work differ. For some, meaning *in* work matters more, for others meaning *at* work is more important, while for still others both meaning *in* and *at* work matter. The quantitative data in Study 2 exhibited an overwhelming salience of meaning *at* work, indicated by the strong and significant association with employees' perception of a *great place to work*, while the qualitative data in Studies 1 and 3 indicated a preference for meaning *in* work, or both. Study 3 also provides glimpses into the range of moderators in the dynamics between meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work, extending the research horizon on meaning *in* and *at* work. The data seems to suggest that meaning *at* work or a meaningful work environment, where we feel that we belong, is a hygiene factor without which meaning *in* work is difficult to find. In other words, meaning *at* work is a precursor or a prerequisite for meaning *in* work, or meaning *in* work becomes very difficult if the work environment is toxic. Another insight from Study 3 is that unlike meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work is more externally driven and difficult to gain/change, especially in larger organizations, and hence it matters more to the employee that the environment is meaningful. As discussed in the meaning *in* and *at* work sections in Chapter 7 on Understanding the Findings, several other factors such as the employees' generation, culture, career position, life situation, spirituality, personality, role in the organization, could matter in the salience of meaning *in* or *at* work.

Fourth, while there have been passing mention in the literature that fit may foster meaningfulness (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Hansen, 2013) this dissertation provides the evidence and the explanations as to why that may be the case. The quantitative data from Study 2 shows consistently, across the Pilot and the Main Surveys, and the Scenario Analysis, that person-work fit significantly and strongly predicts *meaning in work*. Study 3 indicates that in the case of person-work fit, the dimension of a match of interests, that is, having an interest in the work or finding the

work interesting, contributes to meaning *in* work. The other dimensions of person-work fit, such as a match in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities can be acquired if one is interested in the work. Interest in the work makes one more mindful about the outcomes. Further, interest provides motivation and without interest work becomes far less meaningful. Sometimes interest may develop while on the job. Another school of thought, with regard to person-work fit, which emerged from Study 3, is that a high match in knowledge, skills, and abilities in one's work creates confidence, which in turn increases chances of success or the chances of being able to make a contribution, and meaning *in* work. A lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities would mean a struggle with the work and make it meaningless.

A match in the communication/interaction style of the supervisor in person-supervisor fit seem to matter a lot for *meaning at work*. The data from Study 3 suggests that if the communication/interaction style was clear, transparent, and respectful one could work together successfully even though there maybe differences in world views, values, work ethic, etc. On the other hand if the supervisor is not communicative and one has to keep guessing as to what is on the supervisor's mind that doesn't create a meaningful work environment. For person-group fit, many interviewees in Study 3 suggested that one is likely to interact more with one's co-workers than with one's supervisor hence a match of work-related values, commitment towards work and getting along mattered for meaning *at* work. A match with the purpose and that with the culture of the organization seem to matter a lot for a stronger association between person-organization fit and meaning *at* work. The purpose of the organization was especially important for those who were in a senior position or at an advanced stage of their career. The culture was important because it manifested in other aspects of the organization such as its structure, reputation, and organizational environment.

The quantitative data from Study 2 shows a strong and significant relationship between person-organization fit and meaning *at work*. However, the relationship between person-supervisor fit and meaning *at work* is weak and non-significant in the Main Survey (it is weak but significant in the Pilot Surveys 1 and 2, and the Scenario Analysis). One of the reasons for this maybe that the supervisor is not as influential on the social identity or “where do I belong” question of the employee as compared to co-workers, or organizational factors such as culture, support, structure, etc. The changing nature and distance of the supervisor-subordinate relationship, with flatter organizational structures, automations, flexibility, and more complex work-roles, is reducing the influence of the supervisor in an employee’s experience at work. Person-group fit is significantly related to meaning *at work* but not as strongly as person-organization fit.

Fifth, this dissertation provides insights into the salience of the different types of fits for employees’ perceptions of a *great place to work*. The quantitative data gathered in Study 2 clearly indicates that person-organization fit is the most significant and powerful indicator of employees’ perceptions of a *great place to work*. The dimensions used to measure person-organization fit indicate that the factors which matter are (in descending order of factor loading with a cut-off of 0.70) a match with respect to the perceptions about:

1. Organizational support;
2. The way things are done in the organization;
3. Reputation of the organization;
4. Organizational culture;
5. The purpose of the organization; and

6. The rewards from the organization.

Person-supervisor fit is a weak and non-significant predictor of employees' perception of a *great place to work*. Interestingly, the data from the Main Survey, the Second Pilot Survey (which has an effective sample size of 233 as compared 92 in the case of Pilot 1), and the Scenario Analysis indicate a negative relationship between person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. In the case of the three-wave Main Survey this negative relationship is significant. One of the reasons for this negative relationship between person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* maybe the gap between the immediate work-group and the perceptions about the place of work (the organization). While employees may get along and fit well with the people they interact with on a regular basis at work, however, they may not rate their organization as a *great place to work*. For example, a one-person customer care representative of a large multinational corporation, located at a remote grain collection center in the Prairies will care much more about her relationships with her local colleagues, which may not influence her view about the multinational corporation.

Finally, the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* draws on the factor-psychological state-outcome framework from the job characteristics model of work motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and expands to a model for motivation at the workplace, which includes the work and the work environment. Further, the empirically supported *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* reinforces the claim that identity (Stryker & Berke, 2000), social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and social information processing theories (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) offer valid explanations as to why good fits with work, supervisor, work-group and organization may trigger meaning *in* and *at* work.

Empirical Contributions

A major contribution of the dissertation is developing three strong scales (employees' perception of a *great place to work*, meaning *at work*, and person-group fit) and refining four scales (meaning *in work*, person-work fit, person-supervisor fit and person-organization fit). As discussed in Chapter 4 on Research Design, in Chapter 5 on Study 1, and in Chapter 6 on Study 2, the scales to measure were developed rigorously, in the spirit of the recommendations made by Wright et al. (2017). The mechanism of building up the scales for the seven variables is given in Appendices 4 to 10. Each scale is robust with consistently adequate factor loading, reliability, validity, and inter-item correlations, and can be useful to the *great places to work* researchers, the Positive Organizational Scholarship field, and the Fit scholars, especially the person-group fit, which has been problematic (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

One of the important objectives of this dissertation was to conduct methodologically rigorous empirical study in order to move the nascent field of Positive Organizational Scholarship forward (J. Dutton, personal communication, August 8, 2015). The research design, as discussed in Chapter 4, used a mixed methods approach, with a quantitative study (Study 2) sandwiched between two qualitative studies (Studies 1 and 3). In Study 1 (N=26) we gathered qualitative data through semi-structured interviews, to review the *prima facie* validity of the proposed *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* and to obtain inputs for measuring the critical variables in the model. In Study 2 we tested the proposed model with the help of quantitative data gathered through a *three-wave* Main Survey (N=481), preceded by two Pilot Surveys (N=95 and 247), and followed by a robustness test (Scenario Analysis, N=399). In Study 3 (N=45) we gained a deeper understanding of the findings of Study 2 through structured interviews. Please see Table 8.1 for a summary of the Studies. The participants in all the studies were diverse in terms of age, gender, ethnicity,

organization type, organization size, industry, function, years of experience, and level in the organization. Thus the theoretical contribution and the managerial implications of the dissertation is based on rigorous empirical methodology.

Table 8.1: Summary of the Three Studies

Study	Purpose of the Study	Nature of the Study	Methodology	Sample Size	Data Analysis Technique	Results
1.0	To check the prima-facie validity of the proposed model and to gather data for developing/refining scale items to be used in Study 2	Qualitative	Semi-structured Interviews	26	Coding through Atlas.ti	The results indicated prima facie validity of the <i>meaning-through-fit model of great places to work</i> . A majority of the interviewees considered that meaning <i>in</i> work was more important than meaning <i>at</i> work in a <i>great place to work</i> . The codes provided important inputs for measuring the seven critical variables.
2.1	To pilot test the scales for the seven critical variables of the proposed model	Quantitative	Pilot Survey 1	95	CFA, SEM and multiple regression through Stata	The scales for each of the seven critical variables, except the person-group fit scale, were reliable and valid. The negatively worded items showed lower factor loadings across all the variables.
2.2	To pilot test the scales for the seven critical variables of the proposed model, with a different set of participants		Pilot Survey 2	247		The scales for each of the seven critical variables were reliable and valid. The negatively worded items showed lower factor loadings across all the variables.
2.3	To test the proposed model		Three-wave Main Survey	481		The measurement model was strongly supported. The data indicated partial support for the proposed model, with meaning <i>in</i> work partly mediating the relationship between person-work fit and <i>great place to work</i> (Hypothesis 1), and meaning <i>at</i> work partly mediating the relationship between person-organization fit and <i>great place to work</i> (Hypothesis 2). Meaning <i>in</i> and <i>at</i> work were positively related (Hypothesis 3). Meaning <i>at</i> work and person-organization were the strongest predictors of a <i>great place to work</i> . Person-group fit had a negative and significant relationship with <i>great place to work</i> .
2.4	To test the robustness of the results of the three-wave Main Survey		Scenario Analysis	399		t-Test for the differences of the means; CFA, SEM and multiple regression through Stata
3.0	To gain a deeper understanding of the results from Study 2.0	Qualitative	Structured Interviews	45	Theme identification	The data indicated that person-work fit with high levels of match in interests is what mattered most for meaning <i>in</i> work, which in turn is clearly understood as making a contribution. A fit with regard to the interaction/communication style and with regard to work related values of the supervisor seem to matter a lot for meaning <i>at</i> work, which is a work environment that one cherishes, feels connected to, and belonging towards. With respect to person-organization fit a match with the organization's purpose and values seem to be important for meaning <i>at</i> work. The data also suggests that meaning <i>at</i> work creates a work environment which supports meaning <i>in</i> work. Another insight is that the work environment being more externally driven and difficult to gain/change, especially in larger organizations, it matters more to the employee that a <i>great place to work</i> is one where there is a high meaning <i>at</i> work. Finally, the data suggests that the difference in the salience of meaning <i>in</i> and <i>at</i> work may be, at least partially generational or cultural, or that it depends on where you are in your career, or your situation in life, or your spirituality, or your personality, or your role in an organization.

Managerial Implications

The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* offers several important insights for leaders and organizations. Given the benefits of being considered a *great place to work* (e.g., being able to attract and retain talent, exhibit superior financial performance, build reputation, attract customers and investors, gain a higher degree of legitimacy) leaders and organizations need to reflect on employees' aspirations to find meaning *in* and *at* work, and on employees' fit. The first implication for leaders and organizations is that they need to recognize their role as *sense-givers* to the employees. The data from the three studies strongly indicate that employees really care about making a contribution, doing something that they perceive to be important, serving a greater purpose, making a difference, which suggest that the organization can motivate the employees by integrating these aspects of their work into the everyday lives of the employees through the Performance Management System (PMS). Spelling out how the employees are making a contribution can be a powerful source of motivation for them. For example, it will make a world of difference to a person working in the hostile environment of a blast furnace to not only have the production of pig iron as a measure of performance but also to get a feedback in some form on the impact that the person has on others' lives, such as helping people travel (pig iron being converted to wheel, axle and railway tracks for trains), or providing homes (pig iron being converted to bars for construction).

Second, leaders and organizations need to adopt a *cafeteria approach* and offer choices to cater to the differences in the employees' expectations. For example, perceived fit with the organization, a significant predictor of employees' perception of a *great place to work*, consists of several dimensions such as the match with expectations of organizational support, the way things are done in the organization, reputation of the organization, organizational culture, purpose of the

organization, and rewards. However, the salience of each of the dimensions will vary from person to person. A ‘fun at work’ initiative, as a prop for organizational culture, may be appreciated by some while not so by others. Leaders and organizations need to acknowledge this diversity in understanding and expectations, and prioritize offering choices rather than an across the board mandates.

Third, the findings of this research imply that leaders and organizations need to adopt a systematic *workplace meaning survey*. Given the critical role played by meaning *in* and *at* work in the employees’ perception of a *great place to work*, it is important that these parameters be measured and analyzed on a regular basis, and form an integral part of business decision making.

Fourth, the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* suggests that organizations need to adopt a *fit-oriented job design and allocation*. Person-work, person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization fits, defined by the dimensions used to measure them, provide a basis on which job descriptions can be crafted, jobs can be matched with candidates, and existing roles can be redesigned to better fit the incumbents. Person-organization fit warrants greater emphasis and inclusion in formal Human Resource Management Systems in organizations considering that it is the most significant predictor of the employees’ perception of a *great place to work*. This dissertation offers the scales to measure and monitor all the four fit variables.

Fifth, this dissertation reinforces the importance of *job crafting*, which suggests that given the opportunity and the encouragement from the leaders and from the organizations, employees are willing to take it upon themselves to change their task boundaries, discover the place of their work in the bigger picture, affect their work environment, and change the meaning *in* and *at* work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Considering that the fit perspective is about perceptions and that

the meaning *in* and *at* work are forged and not set in stone, employees can be guided through *training* and *mentoring* to craft their jobs to be more aligned and meaningful. The caution about such training and mentoring is that the organization should not “manage meaning” (Lips-Wiersma & Morris, 2009, p. 491) but only help the employees to discover the meaning in their roles.

Finally and most importantly, this research suggests that there is a need for the leaders to reflect more deeply about the notion of meaning. The data from the three studies clearly indicate that employees who find meaning *in* work (they feel that they make a contribution) and meaning *at* work (they like being part of the organization, feel connected to the people in the organization, feel a sense of belonging to the organization, and feel that they can be themselves in the organization), are the ones who are more likely to rate their organizations as *great places to work*. The onus then is on leaders to be more cognizant and introspective of the issues of employees’ meaning *in* and *at* work. Such introspections ought to be around questions like why do the employees do what they do and in aggregate lead to questions around the purpose of the organization. These questions may not have immediate actionable solutions but may require visionary initiatives over a period of time. Several organizations are already traversing this path. For example, the Imperial Tobacco Company (ITC), one of the largest business organizations in India, has gradually diversified into several other businesses and diluted its tobacco business.

Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

This dissertation has a few limitations which also give rise to a future research agenda. First, the dynamic aspects of the perceived fits and the meaning *in* and *at* work were not addressed in the dissertation. Our understanding of what fit means for us and what provides us meaning *in* and

at work evolves as we discover ourselves and our work through learning and over a passage of time (Chalofsky, 2010; Miller, 2008; Frankl, 2006, Turner, 2005). Moreover, the data gathered, especially in the qualitative studies, seem to indicate a tremendous diversity, across generations, societal cultures, career stages, situation in life, personality, work role, in the understanding of and expectations from *great places to work*. How to sustain a perceived *great place to work* within this dynamic environment and the typology/breadth of *great places to work* across diverse contexts are future research questions. Second, the salience of each type of the fit (person-work, person-supervisor, person-group and person-organization) in the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* may differ from person to person, which is also discussed by Jansen and Kristof-Brown (2006). Study 2 (quantitative data) clearly indicates this difference in the salience and suggests that overall person-organization fit seems to be the one that matters most in predicting meaning *at work* and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. Further, research is necessary to understand the reasons behind these differences.

The data also indicates a weak and almost non-existent relationship between person-supervisor fit and meaning *at work* and employees' perception of a *great place to work*, and a significantly negative relationship between person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work*. While I have speculated a few reasons, further research is required to understand these counterintuitive results, which may provide interesting insights to leaders/managers and individuals as to which of the fit factors needs more focus for each person and over time.

Third, while we controlled for several individual level factors that may influence the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* (please see the Measurement Section in Chapter 6 on Testing the Proposed Model) there are yet other factors which may be relevant for a deeper understanding of the model. For example, the extent to which a person is affective (emotional) or

cognitive (logical) may influence the understanding of and expectations from a *great place to work*, what a person considers as personally meaningful (Rosso et al., 2010; King, Hicks, Krull & Del Gaiso, 2006), and the fit salience. As also highlighted by an interviewee in Study 3, personality may be another factor. Factors outside of work such as relationship with family members/friends may also be relevant. This aspect is highlighted by Rosso et al. (2010) and Brief and Nord (1990) with respect to meaning *in* and *at* work. Moreover, just as the perceived pleasantness or the bitterness of the experiences in our work spill over to our lives outside of work, to our families, to other interests, and even to our health (Bambra, 2011), our off-work experiences may rub-off and contribute to the dynamics of the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*.

There are also indications from the data that the salience of meaning *in* and *at* work is likely to differ across cultures, which clearly suggests that macro or societal level factors influence meaning making. Also social changes such as globalization or anti-globalization, or social norms about meaningful work (Rosso et al., 2010) and dirty work (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) may have a bearing on a person's meaning *in* and *at* work. Further, the industry in which the organization operates such as services vis-à-vis manufacturing, or the age of the organization, such as newly born vis-à-vis matured, will influence the significance of meaning *in* and *at* work. In this dissertation I did not parse out these nuances, which provide exciting avenues for future research.

Finally, there is a sizeable body of literature which examines organizational level outcomes of *great places to work* (please see *great place to work: The outcomes* Section in Chapter 2 on Literature Review), however, we know very little about the individual level outcomes. While this is outside the scope of this dissertation, there are indications from the data (Study 2) and the literature that higher degree of meaning *in* and *at* work is also akin to living one's calling, that is, pursuing "... a course of action in pursuit of pro-social intentions embodying the convergence of

an individual's sense of what he or she would like to do, should do, and actually does" (Elangovan et al., 2010, p. 430) or focusing "... on enjoyment of fulfilling, socially useful work" (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997, p. 21), which is associated with better life, health, and job satisfaction, and lower absenteeism (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Based on his observations at the Auschwitz concentration camp, Frankl (2006) suggests that those inmates who could ascribe a meaning to their lives survived the ordeals of the camps better than those who could not. Edwards and Coopers (1988) find evidence that, unlike stress, positive psychological states or eustress, defined as "positive discrepancy between an individual's perceived state and desired state, provided that the presence of this discrepancy is considered important by the individual" (p. 1448) may directly and indirectly improve physical health (Edwards & Cooper, 1988). Also studies have long established a correlation between our experiences at work and our health and/or burnout (Bambra, 2011; Shanafelt, 2009; Beehr & Newman, 1978). So, *great places to work* are also potentially associated with positive career success outcomes (please see Ng, Eby Sorensen & Feldman (2005) for a meta-analysis) for the employees in areas such as subjective career success including job satisfaction, engagement, health, happiness, etc. in addition to objective career success including increased pay and promotions. These would be interesting and useful future research areas.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The Proposal

Considering the important role that work and the organization in which we work play in many of our lives, this dissertation examines when do employees perceive an organization to be a *great place to work*? There is surprisingly little academic research on the construct of *great places to work*. Existing studies, almost entirely by practitioners, suggest several factors that characterize a *great place to work* (please see Appendix 2 for a list of the factors). There are clear gaps in the existing literature, however; one, there is a lack of generalizability of the myriad characterizations of a *great place to work* and two, there is a lack of understanding of the causal core of those characterizations. First, the “one-size fits all” approach for the factors that make an organization a *great place to work* is problematic considering the differences between individuals in how they respond to the same factor or stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Hulin, 1971), the varying ways in which individuals make sense of the same factor or stimuli over a period of time (Frankl, 2006; Bandura, 1999), and the increasing diversity in organizations (Cox Jr., 2001). Second, the literature does not account for the “causal core” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 255), or the experienced meaning, or why the enumerated factors make an organization a *great place to work* (Park et al., 2015; Zorn et al., 2014; McCord, 2014). In other words, the applicability of the existing studies is limited because it isn’t rigorous enough to “cherry pick” and implement factors across an organization/organization(s) without knowing whether those factors are relevant for a particular employee situated in a particular workplace and why. In my dissertation, I fill these two critical gaps using the fit perspective and the mechanism of meaning *in* and *at* work, and theoretically underpin both.

I proposed the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*, in the spirit of the Positive Organizational Scholarship (Cameron et al., 2003), and underpinned by identity (Stryker & Berke, 2000), social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and social information processing theories (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The model tested here hypothesizes that the employees' perception of a *great place to work* is built and sustained by the psychological significance, or the meaning *in* work (from the relationship with the work itself) based on the person-work fit, and from the meaning *at* work (from the relationship with the work environment) based on the person-supervisor, the person-group, and the person-organization fits. It is also suggested that meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are not mutually exclusive but support each other.

The Data Gathering

The hypothesized *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* was empirically tested using mixed methods approach, and with the help of three studies. Study 1 was conducted with the objective to assess the face validity of the proposed model and to obtain inputs for the survey instrument and for the scenario descriptions to be used in Study 2. In Study 1, qualitative data was gathered through open-ended semi-structured interviews of 26 diverse participants. The interviews were transcribed and coded through Atlas.ti. In Study 2, the Hypotheses were tested with the help of quantitative data gathered through a three-wave Main Survey with participants from MTurk (N=481), after two Pilot Surveys (N=95 and 247), each with a different set of diverse participants. To measure the seven critical variables, three scales (person-group fit, meaning *at* work, and employees' perception of a *great place to work*) were developed and four scales (person-work fit, person-supervisor fit, person-organization fit, and meaning *in* work) were refined with the help of data from Study 1 and Pilot Surveys 1 and 2. The results were confirmed with the help of a Scenario Analysis with participants from MTurk (N=399). The data was analyzed with the help of CFA,

SEM and multiple regression. In Study 3, qualitative data was gathered, through 45 structured interviews, with the objective to gain a deeper understand of the findings of Study 2. The participants were again diverse although there was a preference for management experts.

The Outcome

The results of Study 1 provided prima facie validity to the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*. The data indicated that meaning *in* and *at* work played important roles in the case of several interviewees' expectations from a *great place to work*, and a few interviewees were able to put their fingers on it and articulate it passionately after we had had a conversation about meaning *in* and *at* work. A majority of the interviewees considered that meaning *in* work was more important than meaning *at* work, and attributed meaning *in* work to be the main reason for them to continue with their current job. The coding of the interview responses provided important inputs for measuring the seven critical variables in the *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work*.

The quantitative data gathered in the three-wave Main Survey in Study 2 provided partial support to the proposed model, indicating that meaning *in* work partially mediated the relationship between person-work fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* (Hypothesis 1), meaning *at* work partially mediated the relationship between person-organization fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* (a part of Hypothesis 2), and meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work supported each other (Hypothesis 3). However, the relationship between person-supervisor fit and meaning *at* work and employees' perception of a *great place to work* were weak and non-significant, and that between person-group fit and employees' perception of a *great place to work* were negative and significant. The data from the Scenario Analysis corroborated the findings from the three-wave Main Survey. The data from the three-wave Main Survey also indicated that in the overall model meaning *at* work and person-group fit followed by meaning *in*

work had the strongest predictive powers for employees' perception of *great places to work*. Among the control variables, the data indicated that those employees who were a part of the middle or the top management and those employees who thought that it would take them longer to find another comparable job are the ones more likely to rate their organizations as a *great place to work*. Also those employees who perceived their work to be their calling found higher meaning *in work*.

Study 3 provided several important insights into the findings of Study 2. The data indicated that person-work fit with high levels of match in interests is what mattered most for meaning *in work*, which in turn is clearly understood as making a contribution. Match with respect to knowledge, skills, and abilities were also important dimensions of person-work fit as these created confidence, which increased the chances of success or the chances of being able to make a contribution, and meaning *in work*. A fit with regard to the interaction/communication style and with regard to work related values of the supervisor seem to matter a lot for meaning *at work* or a work environment that one cherishes, feels connected to, and belonging towards. Similarities in work related values with co-workers seem to matter even more for meaning *at work*, along with being able to get along and having a concurrent commitment towards work. There was no one factor that emerged as the most dominant one.

With respect to person-organization fit a match with the organization's purpose and values seem to be important for meaning *at work*. The Study 3 data also appear to suggest that meaning *at work* creates a work environment which supports meaning *in work*. In other words, meaning *at work* is a precursor to/prerequisite for meaning *in work*. Another insight is that the work environment being more externally driven and difficult to gain/change, especially in larger organizations, it matters more to the employee that a *great place to work* is one where there is a

high meaning *at* work. Finally, Study 3 suggests that the difference in the salience of meaning *in* and *at* work may be, at least partially generational or cultural, or that it depends on where you are in your career, or your situation in life, or your spirituality, or your personality, or your role in an organization. A brief report (please see Appendix 46) of these results will be shared with the research participants who expressed interest to learn more about the research outcome.

This dissertation contributes to Positive Organizational Scholarship, to the literature on pro-social aspects of work and organizations, and to the literature on *great places to work*. The dissertation extends the works of Pratt and Ashforth's (2003) and Rosso et al. (2010). The findings suggest that fit fosters meaningfulness and makes for a *great place to work* but the different kinds of fit, the dimensions within each fit, and the meaning *in* and *at* work have different saliences. The data also highlights that meaning *in* work is quite uniformly understood as making a contribution (doing something important/serving a greater purpose/making a difference) reinforcing the body of literature that speaks to the inherent importance of the pro-social dimensions of work and organizations (e.g., Steenkamp & Basson, 2013; Elangovan et al., 2010; Grant et al., 2008; Margolis & Walsh, 2003). The *meaning-through-fit model of great places to work* acknowledges that each one of us is unique and may have different expectations from and understanding of a *great place to work*. The fit perspective and the meaning *in* and *at* work provides room for this diversity, and increases the generalizability and the usefulness of the *meaning-through-fit model of great place to work*.

The findings in the dissertation clearly indicate that that our work matter matters to us. Similar findings are emerging from studies in other fields. For example, a study on crowd sourced employer branding published in *Business Horizons* indicates that one of the most important values which employees care about when they evaluate an employer is to what extent will the employee

be able to “put their know-how and skills to meaningful and considerate use” (Dabirian, Kietzmann & Diba, 2017, p. 201). This yearning for meaning *in* work or the urge to make a contribution is perhaps linked to our altruistic (Piliavin & Charng, 1990) and prosocial (Grant, 2007) nature, and if wider recognition of this aspect is given as a core of our being it can have significant ramifications. Another impactful finding is that reputation and purpose of the organization are important dimensions of person-organization fit, which in turn is a powerful predictor of meaning *at* work and *great places to work*. This raises important pointers for the managers/leaders of organizations. Interestingly, person-supervisor and person-group fit don’t appear to matter as much but the triangle of meaning *in* work, meaning *at* work, and person-organization fit seem to largely explain when employees will rate an organization as a *great place to work*. Probing this triangle in terms of when do employees think that they are making a contribution (meaning *in* work), when do employees feel connected to their work environment (meaning *at* work), and when do employees/others think positively about the organization and its purpose (person-organization fit) can have far reaching consequences, and are worthy areas of research going forward, building on the strong foundation here.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Rankings of Organizations

Ranking (in alphabetical order)	Brief description
<i>Achievers.com's</i> 50 most engaged companies	This ranking is based on the evaluation done by a panel who study leadership, communication, rewards and recognition, professional and personal growth, accountability and performance, vision and values, culture, and corporate social responsibility (Butler, 2014).
The <i>AON Hewitt's</i> best employers across Asia-Pacific region	This ranking is based on data collected through surveys from more than 140,000 employees covering more than 800 organizations (Malik & Vartak, 2011).
Best Places to Work in the Federal Government in the United States	The United States office of Personnel Management conducts a federal employee viewpoint survey from which the federal agencies are ranked based on employee job satisfaction and commitment measures (Kayanan, 2012).
Best Places to Work, New Zealand	This ranking is based on anonymous online employee surveys. The organizations are ranked based on satisfaction with one's team and job, culture and values, common purpose, communication and cooperation, learning and professional development, performance and recognition, and overall perceptions of the organization (Zorn et al., 2014).
Canada's top 100 employers	This ranking uses eight criteria to evaluate the places to work: (1) physical places to work, (2) work and social atmosphere, (3) health, financial and family benefits, (4) vacation and time off, (5) employee communications, (6) performance management, (7) training and skills development, and (8) community involvement (Mediacorp Canada Inc., 2015).
Canada's top admired corporate cultures	This ranking stresses on strong corporate cultures requiring programs that reinforce, support, and reward, and celebrate these positive behavior: hiring the right people, internal promotion of future leaders, measurement of these future leaders, measuring performance, excellent physical environment, effective rewards and recognition programs, good communication and training, and employee engagement (Love & Singh, 2011).
<i>Careerbliss.com's</i> happiest companies in America	The ranking is based on independent employee survey that evaluates boss and co-workers relationships, work environment, job resources, compensation, growth opportunities, company culture, company reputation, daily tasks, and job control (Butler, 2014).
<i>Chronicle of Higher Education's</i> best colleges to work for	The ranking is based on employee survey of leadership, careers, compensation, diversity, resources, security, and work-life balance (Philipsen, 2014).

survey	
<i>Computerworld's</i> 100 best places for IT professionals to work	This ranking is based on turnover, promotions, and training for large, mid-sized, and small IT firms in the US (Computerworld Inc., 2015).
Employers of choice for knowledge Workers	Sutherland, Torricelli and Karg, (2002) use qualitative methods, namely interviews, to ascertain the factors that knowledge workers use to identify employers of choice. The authors use quantitative methods, namely, factor analysis to estimate the factors that matter the most to the knowledge workers.
<i>Fortune</i> magazine's 100 best companies to work for in America and 50 best small and medium companies to work for in Americas, and <i>HR Magazine's</i> 50 best small and medium companies	The Great Place to Work Institute, San Francisco, uses a survey called the Great Place to Work, Trust Index. The survey covers employees and management. Two-thirds of the total score comes from the responses to a 57-question survey from 350 randomly selected employees of each company that participates. The survey asks about attitudes toward management, job satisfaction, and camaraderie. One-third of the score comes from evaluation of each company's demographic makeup, pay and benefits programs, etc. The inputs from management consist of pay and benefits, hiring practices, methods of internal communication, training, recognition programs, and diversity efforts (Butler, 2014; Andrade, 2013). Other inputs relating to the organization such as employee handbooks, annual reports, media reports, are also reviewed by the GPWI. Four areas are scored: credibility (communication to employees), respect (opportunities and benefits), fairness (compensation, diversity), and pride/camaraderie (philanthropy, celebrations). In case adverse news about a company comes to light that may significantly damage employees' faith in management, such companies may be excluded from the list (Levering & Moskowitz, 2005).
Glassdoor best places to work	The ranking is based on independent employee survey that evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of working for the employer, employee advice for senior management, satisfaction with the company, effectiveness of the CEO, career opportunities, compensation and benefits, culture and values, and work-life balance (Butler, 2014).
Global most admired companies	The organizations are evaluated based on innovation, quality of management, value of long term investment, corporate social responsibility, ability to attract talent, service and product quality, financial stability, intelligent use of asset, and the ability to do business globally (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1512).

<p>Hewitt Associates study of best employers across Asia, Europe, and the Americas</p>	<p>This study was based on five years' data of 1,500 companies collected through three surveys: (1) Employee engagement or opinion survey consisting of questions around work, people, compensation, procedures, opportunities, and quality of life; (2) CEO or leadership team survey comprising of questions around the organization and its operations, employee demographics, key strategic issues, key factors impacting business results, current people issues, allocation of time between business and people issues, and key people practices and their impact on the business; and (3) people practices inventory consisting of questions around recruiting, hiring, orientation, development, learning, work environment, compensation, rewards, health, wellbeing, work life balance, financial security, people practices, and innovation (Looi et al., 2004; Bennett & Bell, 2004).</p>
<p>Houston's top places to work</p>	<p>The survey factors in order of the importance accorded by the respondents are: Connection, direction, execution, work, manager, and pay and benefits. Connection denotes appreciation, prospects, and meaningfulness at work. Direction represents the degree of comfort with the course pursued by the organization, confidence in the leadership, and the values and ethics in the organization. Execution covers sensitivity of managers, efficiency, innovation, and transparency. Work signifies alignment with expectations, positive environment, training, and flexibility. Manager embodies care, help and facilitation. Pay and benefits include fairness and comparability with competitors (WorkplaceDynamics, 2015).</p>
<p><i>Higher Education's</i> best colleges to work for</p>	<p>The colleges are rated on the basis of leadership qualities that inspire confidence and promote collaboration, career clarity and development, compensation, job satisfaction, respect, appreciation, places to work diversity and security, and work-life balance (Philipsen, 2014).</p>
<p><i>Merco empresas</i> in Spain and South America</p>	<p>The organization are ranked based on financial results, product and service quality, corporative culture and labor quality, ethics and corporate governance, global presence, and innovation (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1512).</p>
<p><i>Merco personas</i> in Spain and South America</p>	<p>The organizations are ranked based on external rotation of the workforce, diversity of employees, qualifications, technology, professional development, careers, compensation, employee participation policies, and labor relations (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1515).</p>
<p><i>Modern Healthcare's</i> 100 best places to work in healthcare</p>	<p>This ranking is based on a survey of employees and administrators on issues of engagement, satisfaction, benefits and policies of self-nominated hospitals (Underwood et al., 2011; Modern Healthcare, 2015).</p>

Place to work index	Andrade (2013) proposes this index comprising of security, integrity, reciprocity, citizenship, and authenticity. Security encompasses financial and physical stability. Integrity signifies faith and trust. Reciprocity means mutually beneficial relationship between employer and employee. Citizenship denotes doing the right thing in business transactions and for the community. Authenticity represents inclusive environment.
Places to work retrak	The organizations are ranked based on working conditions, conduct and leadership, product and corporate governance, and professional development (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1516).
RepTrak pulse	The organizations are evaluated based on the emotional attributes like admiration, trust, esteem, and feeling (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1512).
Review 200 of Asian companies	The organizations are evaluated based on client service, product and service quality, financial health, long term investment value, and innovation (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1512).
<i>Sunday Times</i> best places to work for in the United Kingdom	The ranking is based on employee surveys (Zorn et al., 2014).
The happy manifesto	Stewart (2013) suggests that good and productive places to work trusts people, gives freedom with guidelines, makes people feel good about themselves, allows mistakes, communicates transparently, recruits for attitude and trains for skill, promotes work life balance, selects supportive managers, and keeps the community in mind.
What employees want from the organizations where they work	Based on a survey of over 200,000 employees around the globe, over 30 years, Wiley (2012) suggests that the most important things that employees want from the organizations where they work are Recognition, Exciting work, Security of employment, Pay, Education and career growth, Conditions that are comfortable and safe, and Truthful communication (RESPECT).
<i>Working mother's</i> 100 best companies	This model uses childcare assistance, pay, opportunities for women to advance, other family-friendly policies, and places to work flexibility (Filbec & Preece, 2003).
World's most respected companies	The organizations are evaluated based on the creation of value, integrity and corporate governance (Casado & Peláez, 2014, p. 1512).

Appendix 2: Lists of Soft and Hard Factors Attributed to Great Places to Work

Hard factors	Soft factors
<p>Resources, pay and benefits, safety (Philipsen, 2014; Jeffries, 2002); physical places to work, vacations, performance management, training and skills development (Mediacorp Canada Inc., 2015); flexible work arrangement (Mencl & Lester, 2014; Fayers, 2013; Jeffries, 2002); job rotation, product profile, organization structure, industry (Sutherland, Torricelli & Karg, 2002); job security (Wiley, 2012); employee welfare, pay and working hours (Park et al., 2015); flexible benefits (Fayers, 2013).</p>	<p>Trust, credibility, respect, fairness, pride, camaraderie, relationships at work (Burchell & Robin, 2010); equal opportunities, recognition, transparency, wellness, work-life balance, accountability, civility (Philipsen, 2014); work and social atmosphere, communications, community involvement (Mediacorp Canada Inc., 2015); strong corporate culture, employee engagement (Love & Singh, 2011); people oriented human resource practices (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010); team work, challenging job, involvement in decision making process, climate of diversity, immediate feedback (Mencl & Lester, 2014); fun at places to work (Computerworld Inc., 2015); inspired leadership, growth opportunities (Looi et al., 2004); high degree of focus and clarity, people and learning oriented culture, integrity of leaders, passion for achievement (Joo & McLean, 2006); innovation and global outlook, diversity, organization values, organizational environment (Sutherland, Torricelli & Karg, 2002); meaningful work (Herman & Gioia, 2001; Jeffries, 2002); encourage learning, social engagement (Casella, 2014); supportive feedback, work that makes a difference, dynamic teams, autonomy (Johnson, 2014); employee skills and mission match, strategic management, effective leadership, (Kayanan, 2012); reputation (Taskinen, 2011); high performance sustained as a way of life (Malik & Vartak, 2011); satisfaction with one's team and job, culture and values, common purpose, cooperation, overall perception, (Zorn et al., 2014); makes people feel good about themselves, and allows mistakes (Stewart, 2013); appreciation, meaningfulness at work, the degree of comfort with the course pursued by the organization, confidence in the leadership, the values and ethics in the organization, execution covers sensitivity of managers, efficiency, innovation, and transparency, work signifies alignment with expectations, positive environment, training, and flexibility, manager embodies care, help and facilitation (WorkplaceDynamics, 2015; Jeffries, 2002); livable (Mitchell, 1985); mutuality (Bennett & Bell, 2004); work environments and interpersonal relationships (Park et al., 2015); gender diversity (Bernardi et al., 2006); servant leadership (McGee-Cooper & Trammell, 2010; Jeffries, 2002); personal and career growth (Jeffries, 2002); personal fulfilment, achievement of personal goals, and personal needs (Moran Jr., 2009); work-life balance and living values (Fayers, 2013) .</p>

Appendix 3: List of Questions Used in the Semi-structured Interviews (Study 1)

Sl.	The Question
1.	When do you consider an organization a <i>great place to work</i> /do you consider your current organization a <i>great place to work</i> ?
2.	Now I will divide the workplace into four components ... one is the task or the work itself ... second is the relationship with the boss or the supervisor or the leadership ... third is the relationship with the coworkers or the peers ... and fourth is the relationship with the organizations' culture, structure and reputation ... so my first question is ... when do you find a task or work to be a good fit for you?
3.	When do you consider your boss or your supervisor or the leadership to be a good fit for you?
4.	When it comes to your co-workers when do you think they are a good fit for you?
5.	So coming to the last component, when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you and may be you can frame your thinking in terms of the culture or the structure or the reputation of the organization?
6.	So ... I asked you about four kinds of fit ... work, leader, peers, and organizations ... which of these four fits is most important to you?
7.	Now, I come to the meaning of work ... here I will divide the workplace in to two components ... one is the work itself and the second is the work environment, which includes supervisor, peers and the organization ... so, when is the work itself meaningful to you and what does meaningful mean to you (we label this meaning <i>in work</i>)?
8.	When do you find your work environment to be meaningful (we label this as meaning <i>at work</i>)?
9.	So ... my next question is which is more important to you ... meaning <i>in work</i> or meaning <i>at work</i> , and why?
10.	I asked you about fit and I asked you about meaning <i>in work</i> or meaning <i>at work</i> ... do you think that these two are distinct ... if so, in what way?
11.	Suppose you have three different job offers and each one of them are comparable with regard to financial rewards, commitment of your time and other factors like commute from your place, etc. So ... in such a situation how would you decide which offer to accept?
12.	The last question is actually going back to the first question ... would you like to make any modification(s) to your responses about your idea of <i>great places to work</i> ... post our conversation (share the response to the first question)?

Appendix 4: Scale Refinement - Person-Work Fit

1. **Person-work fit** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ■; item 2 ■; item 3 ■; item 4 ■; item 5 ■; item 6 ■; common for more than one item ■). The **chang(es) proposed in the Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.**

Definition	Top 5 codes from the first round data gathered via semi-structured interviews	Widely used existing scale items or widely cited paper	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.22); α : 0.85; AVE: 0.54)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.35); α : 0.83; AVE: 0.56)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>The relationship between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005)</p>	<p>Question: Now I will divide the workplace into four components ... one is the task or the work itself ... second is the relationship with the boss or the supervisor or the leadership ... third is the relationship with the coworkers or the peers ... and fourth is the relationship with the organizations' culture, structure and reputation ... so my first question is ... when do you find the work or the task to be a good fit for you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 codes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uses my knowledge 2. Utilizes and/or stretches my skills 3. Ability to do the job 4. Interesting work 5. Learning and opportunities to learn 	<p>Saks and Ashforth's (1997) 4-item scale (Cronbach α not available):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent do your knowledge, skills, and abilities match the requirements of your job? 2. To what extent is the job a good match for you? 3. To what extent does the job fulfill your needs? 4. To what extent does the job enable you to do the kind of work you want to do? (p. 406) <p>Lauver and Kristof-Brown's (2001) 5-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.79):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My abilities fit the demands of this job 2. I have the right skills and abilities to do this job 3. There is a good match between the requirements of this job and my skills 4. My personality is a good match for this job 5. I am the right type of person for this type of work (p. 460) 	<p>PWF1: I think my abilities are a good match for the requirements of my work.</p> <p>PWF2: I have the right set of knowledge for my work.</p> <p>PWF3: There is a good match between my skills and those necessary for my work.</p> <p>PWF4: I do not find my work interesting.</p> <p>PWF5: I am the right type of person for this type of work.</p> <p>PWF6: I am doing the kind of work that I want to do.</p>	<p>0.73</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.72</p> <p>0.57</p> <p>0.77</p> <p>0.72</p>	<p>PWF1: I think my abilities are a good match for the requirements of my work.</p> <p>PWF2: I have the right set of knowledge for my work.</p> <p>PWF3: I am the right type of person for this type of work.</p> <p>PWF4: There is a good match between my skills and those necessary for my work.</p> <p>PWF5: I am doing the kind of work that I want to do.</p> <p>PWF6: I do not find my work interesting.</p>	<p>0.80</p> <p>0.81</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.63</p> <p>0.39</p>	<p>PWF1: I think my abilities are a good match for the requirements of my work.</p> <p>PWF2: I have the right set of knowledge for my work.</p> <p>PWF3: I am the right type of person for this type of work.</p> <p>PWF4: There is a good match between my skills and those necessary for my work.</p> <p>PWF5: My personality is a good match for my work.</p> <p>PWF6: The work that I do matches well with my interests.</p>

Appendix 5: Scale Refinement - Person-Supervisor Fit

2. **Person-supervisor fit** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ■; item 2 ■; item 3 ■; item 4 ■; item 5 ■; item 6 ■; common for more than one item ■).
 The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 codes from the first round data gathered via semi-structured interviews	Widely used existing scale items or widely cited paper	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.25); α : 0.90; AVE: 0.65)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.49); α : 0.89; AVE: 0.58)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>The compatibility in the dyadic relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate (Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005)</p>	<p>Question: When do you consider your boss or your supervisor or the leadership to be a good fit for you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 codes: 1. Provides autonomy 2. Broadly matching world views and values, especially those pertaining to work 3. Authentic 4. Caring 5. Experienced 6. Respectful</p> <p>(3, 4, 5, 6: Same number of counts)</p>	<p>Kim and Kim's (2013) 3-item scale (Cronbach α not available):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> My supervisor's values provide a good fit with the things that I value in life. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my supervisor values. My personal values match my supervisor's values (p. 7). <p>The above is based on Cable and DeRue's (2002) 3-item scale to measure person-organization fit (Cronbach α - 0.91), wherein "organization" is replaced with "supervisor."</p>	<p>PSF1: I am happy with the autonomy/freedom that my supervisor provides to do my work.</p> <p>PSF2: I think my supervisor's world views are similar to that of mine.</p> <p>PSF3: The things that I value at work are similar to those that my supervisor values.</p> <p>PSF4: My supervisor provides me appropriate guidance to do my work.</p> <p>PSF5: I do not like the way my supervisor interacts with me.</p>	<p>0.67</p> <p>0.82</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.80</p> <p>0.85</p>	<p>PSF1: My supervisor's work ethics are similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PSF2: The things that I value at work are similar to those that my supervisor values.</p> <p>PSF3: I think my supervisor's worldviews are similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PSF4: My supervisor provides me with sufficient autonomy to do my work.</p> <p>PSF5: I think my supervisor provides me adequate guidance to do my work.</p> <p>PSF6: I do not like the way my supervisor interacts with me.</p>	<p>0.84</p> <p>0.86</p> <p>0.77</p> <p>0.67</p> <p>0.74</p> <p>0.67</p>	<p>PSF1: My supervisor's work ethic are similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PSF2: The things that I value with regard to work are similar to those that my supervisor values.</p> <p>PSF3: I think my supervisor's worldviews are similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PSF4: My supervisor provides me with sufficient flexibility in how I do my work.</p> <p>PSF5: I think my supervisor provides me adequate guidance to do my work.</p> <p>PSF6: I like the way my supervisor interacts with me.</p> <p>PSF7: The approach I have towards work is similar to that of my supervisor.</p>

Appendix 6: Scale Development - Person-Group Fit

3. **Person-group fit** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ■; item 2 ■; item 3 ■; item 4 ■; item 5 ■; item 6 ■; common for more than one item ■). The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 themes from Study 1 (semi-structured interviews)	Existing scale items	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (1.35); α : 0.63; AVE: 0.34)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.60); α : 0.88; AVE: 0.52)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>The compatibility of values, personalities and abilities between individuals and their work groups (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The perceived person-group fit, may be supplementary or complementary or both.</p>	<p>Question: When it comes to your co-workers when do you think they are a good fit for you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respectfulness 2. Getting along 3. Internally motivated coworkers 4. Honesty 5. Complement each other 6. Openness 7. Collaborative 8. Balanced between work and fun <p>★ Same number of counts</p>	<p>Vogel and Feldman's (2009) 5-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.76):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with people in my group is one of the best parts of this job. 2. I get along well with the people I work with on a day-to-day basis. 3. There is not much conflict among the members of my group. 4. If I had more free time, I would enjoy spending more time with co-workers socially. 5. There are some people I work with I try to avoid when possible (reverse coded) (p. 80). <p>Seong and Kristof-Brown (2012) scale (Cronbach α not available): The values based dimension:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my team members value. 2. My personal values match my team's values and culture. 3. My team's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life. <p>The personality based dimension:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I feel that my personality matches my team's image. 2. My personality matches my teams' personality. 3. My personality provides a good fit with my teams' personality. <p>The knowledge, skills, and abilities based dimension :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The match is very good between the demands of my team's task and my personal skills. 2. My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of the team's tasks. 3. My abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my team tasks place on me. (p. 543) 	<p>PGF1: The things that I value at work are similar to the things that my work-group values.</p> <p>PGF2: I get along well with my work-group.</p> <p>PGF3: My abilities are a good match with those required to deal with the demands of my workgroup.</p> <p>PGF4: Most of the members of my work-group do <i>not</i> have similar levels of commitment towards work like I do.</p>	<p>0.62</p> <p>0.68</p> <p>0.60</p> <p>0.38</p>	<p>PGF1: Most of the people I work with are similar to me in how they approach work.</p> <p>PGF2: I get along well with most of the people I interact with at work.</p> <p>PGF3: My abilities are a good match with those needed to deal with the requirements of the people I work with.</p> <p>PGF4: Most of the people I work with have similar commitment towards work as I do.</p> <p>PGF5: The things that I value at work are similar to the things that most of the people I work with value.</p> <p>PGF6: I think most of the people I work with have worldviews similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PGF7: My personality is a good match with that of the people I work with.</p>	<p>0.71</p> <p>0.58</p> <p>0.55</p> <p>0.78</p> <p>0.83</p> <p>0.77</p> <p>0.75</p>	<p>PGF1: Most of the people I normally work with are similar to me in how they approach work.</p> <p>PGF2: I get along well with most of the people I normally interact with in my work.</p> <p>PGF3: My abilities are a good match with most of the people with whom I normally interact in my work.</p> <p>PGF4: Most of the people I normally work with have similar commitment towards work as I do.</p> <p>PGF5: The things that I value with regard to work are similar to those valued by most of the people I normally work with.</p> <p>PGF6: I think most of the people I normally work with have worldviews similar to those of mine.</p> <p>PGF7: My personality is a good match with most of the people I normally work with.</p>

Appendix 7: Scale Refinement - Person-Organization Fit

4. **Person-organization fit** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ■; item 2 ■; item 3 ■; item 4 ■; item 5 ■; item 6 ■; common for more than one item ■).
 The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 codes from the first round data gathered via semi-structured interviews	Widely used existing scale items or widely cited paper	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (2.86); α : 0.87; AVE: 0.57)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.99); α : 0.88; AVE: 0.50)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>The compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both⁷ (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4-5).</p>	<p>Question: So ... the last component when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 codes (culture):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical (8) 2. Openness (4) 3. Fit with the culture (4) 4. Open to change (4) 5. Respectful 6. Values it's people <p style="margin-left: 150px;">} Same number of counts</p> <p>Top 5 codes (structure):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flat structure (5) 2. Flexible (4) 3. Learning and opportunities to learn (4) 4. Clarity 5. Fit with educational qualification <p>Top 5 codes (purpose):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purposeful (5) 2. Clarity of purpose (4) 3. Committed to social and environmental issues 4. Not for profit 5. Not disempowering <p>Top codes (reputation):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reputation acceptable to self (6) 2. Well reputed (4) 3. Serves a greater cause 4. Reputation is important 	<p>Lauver and Kristof-Brown's (2001) 3-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.83) adapted from Cable and Judge (1996):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My values match or fit the values of this organization 2. I am able to maintain my values at this company. 3. My values prevent me from fitting in at this company because they are different from company's values (p. 460). <p>Valentine, Godkin and Lucero (2002) adapted from Netemeyer, Boles, McKee and McMurrian's (1997) 4-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.88):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organization. 2. This organization has the same values as I do with regard to concern for others. 3. This organization has the same values as I do with regard to honesty. 4. This organization has the same values as I do with regard to fairness. <p>Kim, Cable and Kim (2005) adapted from Cable and DeRue's (2002) 3-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.83+):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life. 2. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values. 3. My personal values match my organization's values and culture. 	<p>POF1: The things that I value at work are similar to those that my organization values.</p> <p>POF2: The culture of my organization is <i>not</i> a good match for me.</p> <p>POF3: I like the way things are done in my organization.</p> <p>POF4: The purpose of my organization is what I would like it to be.</p> <p>POF5: I think my organization has a great reputation</p>	<p>0.69</p> <p>0.84</p> <p>0.75</p> <p>0.76</p> <p>0.72</p>	<p>POF1: I like the way things are done in my organization.</p> <p>POF2: The support I get from my organization is consistent with my needs.</p> <p>POF3: The rewards I gain from being a part of my organization are as per my expectations.</p> <p>POF4: The things that I value at work are similar to those that my organization values.</p> <p>POF5: My abilities match the expectations that my organization has of me.</p> <p>POF6: The culture of my organization is not a good match for me.</p> <p>POF7: I like the reputation that my organization enjoys.</p> <p>POF8: The purpose of my organization is what I would like it to be.</p>	<p>0.84</p> <p>0.80</p> <p>0.71</p> <p>0.84</p> <p>0.47</p> <p>0.61</p> <p>0.58</p> <p>0.72</p>	<p>POF1: I like the way things are done in my organization.</p> <p>POF2: The support I get from my organization is consistent with my needs.</p> <p>POF3: The rewards I gain from being a part of my organization are as per my expectations.</p> <p>POF4: The things that I value with regard to work are similar to those that my organization values.</p> <p>POF5: My abilities match my organization's needs for me.</p> <p>POF6: The culture of my organization is a good match for me.</p> <p>POF7: My organization has the kind of reputation that I like.</p> <p>POF8: The purpose of my organization is what I would like it to be.</p>

Appendix 8: Scale Refinement - Meaning in Work

5. **Meaning in work** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ; item 2 ; item 3 ; item 4 ; item 5 ; item 6 ; common for more than one item). The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 codes from the first round data gathered via semi-structured interviews	Widely used existing scale items or widely cited paper	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (2.59); α : 0.83; AVE: 0.52)	Pilot1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (2.99); α : 0.88; AVE: 0.60)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>A perception derived “from the intrinsic qualities of the work itself, the goals, values, and beliefs that the work is thought to serve” and pertains to the role or “what am I doing?” and not from “where that work is done” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315).</p> <p>The significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw intrinsically from the relationship with our work (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003)</p>	<p>Question: Now, I move on to a slightly different topic ... meaningfulness ... here I will divide the workplace in to two categories ... one is the work itself and second is the work environment, which includes supervisor, peers and the organization ... so, when is work meaningful to you and what does meaningful mean to you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 codes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping people/benefitting society/making a difference/a positive impact 2. Contributing to the desired outcome 3. Allowed to be authentic 4. Fulfilment 5. Financial reward 	<p>May, Gilson and Harter’s (2004) 6-item scale (Cronbach α - 0.90):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The work I do on this job is very important to me. 2. My job activities are personally meaningful to me. 3. The work I do on this job is worthwhile. 4. My job activities are significant to me. 5. The work I do on this job is meaningful to me. 6. I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable. (p. 36) <p>Schnell, Höge and Pollet (2013) (adapted from the meaningfulness of life scale) :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meaningfulness (Cronbach α - 0.74): 1.1 I think there is meaning in what I do; 1.2 I have a task in life; 1.3 I feel part of a bigger whole; 1.4 I lead a fulfilled life; 1.5 I think my life has a deeper meaning. 2. Crisis of meaning (Cronbach α - 0.92): 2.1 When I think about the meaning of my life I find only emptiness; 2.2 My life seems meaningless; 2.3 I don’t see any sense in life; 2.4 I suffer from the fact that I don’t see any point in life; 2.5 My life seems empty. <p>Steger, Dik and Duffy (2012) (work and meaning inventory):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive meaning (Cronbach α - 0.89); 1.1 I have found a meaningful career; 1.2 I understand how my work contributes to my life’s meaning; 1.3 I have a good sense of what makes my job meaningful; 1.4 I have discovered work that has a satisfying purpose. 2. Making meaning through work (Cronbach α - 0.82); 2.1 I view my work as contributing to my personal growth; 2.2 My work helps me better understand myself; 2.3 My work helps me to make sense of the world around me; 3. Greater good motivation (Cronbach α - 0.83): 3.1 My work really makes no difference to the world (reverse coded); 3.2 I know my work makes a positive difference in the world; 3.3 The work I do serves a greater purpose. (p. 330) 	<p>MIW1: I think that the work I do is important.</p> <p>MIW2: My work serves a greater purpose.</p> <p>MIW3: My work provides me fulfilment.</p> <p>MIW4: I think my work allows me to be myself.</p> <p>MIW5: I do not feel connected to my work.</p>	<p>0.61</p> <p>0.72</p> <p>0.80</p> <p>0.77</p> <p>0.68</p>	<p>MIW1: My work allows me to be myself.</p> <p>MIW2: The work I do is very important to me.</p> <p>MIW3: My work serves a greater purpose.</p> <p>MIW4: My work provides me fulfilment.</p> <p>MIW5: I do not feel a connection with my work.</p>	<p>0.50</p> <p>0.89</p> <p>0.79</p> <p>0.89</p> <p>0.72</p>	<p>MIW1: I can be myself when I do my work.</p> <p>MIW2: The work I do is very important to me.</p> <p>MIW3: My work serves a greater purpose.</p> <p>MIW4: My work provides me fulfilment.</p> <p>MIW5: I feel a connection with my work.</p>

Appendix 9: Scale Development - Meaning at Work

6. **Meaning at work** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ; item 2 ; item 3 ; item 4 ; item 5 ; item 6 ; common for more than one item). The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 themes from Study 1 (semi-structured interviews)	Existing scale items	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.47); α : 0.89; AVE: 0.58)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.29); α : 0.86; AVE: 0.55)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>A perception derived from “the organizational community within which the work is embedded” and pertains to membership or “where do I belong?” and not from “what one does” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, pp. 311-315).</p> <p>The significance or the subjective sense of the deeper purpose that we draw extrinsically from the relationship with our work environment (Wrzesniewski, 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003).</p>	<p>Question: When do you find your work environment to be meaningful?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allows one to be authentic 2. People are approachable 3. People are supportive 4. Feel connected with the people 5. Family type environment 	<p>I did not find any widely used existing scale or widely cited paper. Clausen, Burr and Borg’s (2014) and Clausen and Borg’s, (2011) 3-item scale, (Cronbach α - 0.76), drawn from the Copenhagen psychosocial questionnaire (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg & Bjørner, 2010), measure meaning at work but conceptualized differently:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you feel that the work you do is important? 2. Is your work meaningful? 3. Do you feel motivated and engaged in your work? (p. 22) 	<p>MAW1: I think my work environment allows me to be myself.</p> <p>MAW2: My work environment helps me to perform at my best.</p> <p>MAW3: I cherish the environment at my work.</p> <p>MAW4: I feel a sense of belonging to my organization.</p> <p>MAW5: I do not feel connected to the people in the organization.</p> <p>MAW6: I value the role that my organization plays in society.</p>	<p>0.71</p> <p>0.83</p> <p>0.88</p> <p>0.84</p> <p>0.68</p> <p>0.59</p>	<p>MAW1: I cherish the environment at my work.</p> <p>MAW2: I think my work environment allows me to be myself.</p> <p>MAW3: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.</p> <p>MAW4: I do not feel a connection with the people in my organization.</p> <p>MAW5: Being a part of my organization means a lot to me.</p> <p>MAW6: I think that my organization serves a greater purpose.</p>	<p>0.79</p> <p>0.76</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.44</p> <p>0.82</p> <p>0.68</p>	<p>MAW1: I cherish the environment in my organization.</p> <p>MAW2: I feel that the environment in my organization allows me to be myself.</p> <p>MAW3: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.</p> <p>MAW4: I feel a connection with the people in my organization.</p> <p>MAW5: Being a part of my organization means a lot to me.</p> <p>MAW6: I feel that my organization serves a greater purpose.</p> <p>MAW7: I feel a sense of fulfilment in being a part of this organization.</p>

Appendix 10: Scale Development - Employees' Perception of a Great Place to Work

7. **Great place to work** (color legend of the sources: item 1 ■; item 2 ■; item 3 ■; item 4 ■; item 5 ■; item 6 ■; common for more than one item ■). The chang(es) proposed in Main Survey is(are) highlighted thus.

Definition	Top 5 themes from Study 1 (semi-structured interviews)	Existing scale items	Pilot 1 scale items (N=95; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (7.38); α : 0.94; AVE: 0.63)	Pilot 1 Factor loading	Pilot 2 scale items, excluding GPW1 (N=247; Factors with eigenvalue > 1: 1 (3.86); α : 0.91; AVE: 0.64)	Pilot 2 Factor loading	Proposed Main Survey scale items
<p>“From the employee’s perspective, a great workplace is one where they: Trust the people they work for; have pride in what they do; enjoy the people they work with” (GPWI, 2014, p.1).</p> <p>Great places to work are those organizations which allow high quality “... relationships between employees and their leaders, between employees and their jobs, and between employees and each other” (Levering, 1988, p. 4).</p> <p>“A great firm to work for is defined as a firm whose employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs ... as well as positive perceptions of their work environment” (Butler, 2014, p. 1)</p>	<p>Question: Do you consider your current organization a <i>great place to work</i>? When do you consider an organization a <i>great place to work</i>? What does great mean to you?</p> <p>Interview data analysis results: Top 5 themes (relationship with the work): 1. Meaningful/making a difference (8); 2. Productive; 3. Fulfilment; 4. Challenging; 5. Feeling effective Top themes (relationship with the supervisor): 1. Approachable leader; 2. Effective; 3. Mentoring Top 5 themes (relationship with the coworkers): 1. Good relationships (8); 2. Camaraderie; 3. Person-group fit; 4. Approachable coworkers; 5. Collaborative Top 5 themes (relationship with the organization’s culture): 1. Respectful/good work environment (7); 2. Organizational support (6); 3. Valued as an employee and heard (6); 4. Shared values (6); 5. Caring Top 5 themes (relationship with the organization’s structure): 1. Financial/fair rewards/medical benefits (10); 2. Autonomy (9); 3. Growth and opportunities to grow (8); 4. Learning and opportunities to learn; 5. Job security Top 5 themes (relationship with the organization’s purpose): 1. Delivers value to the customer; 2. Shared purpose; 3. Making a difference; 4. Shared passion; 5. Transcendental purpose</p>	<p>The Great Place to Work Institute (GPWI), on behalf of the <i>Fortune</i> and several other magazines, uses a survey called the Great Place to Work, Trust Index, which covers credibility (communication to employees), respect (opportunities and benefits), fairness (compensation, diversity), and pride/camaraderie (philanthropy, celebrations). The survey items are not accessible. Most studies use the organizations listed by GPWI as a proxy for <i>great places to work</i>. A detailed mechanism of how GPWI prepares this list as well as those adopted by other GPWI-like other firms are given in Appendix 1. A list of the factors attributed to <i>great places to work</i> by various studies is given in Appendix 2.</p>	<p>GPW1: I think my organization is a <i>great place to work</i>.</p> <p>GPW2: My work and my work environment has most of the characteristics that I think are important in a <i>great place to work</i>.</p> <p>GPW3: I feel a sense of pride in my work.</p> <p>GPW4: I think the leadership in my organization is like that of a <i>great place to work</i>.</p> <p>GPW5: I think there is a high level of trust in my workgroup.</p> <p>GPW6: I think there is a high level of camaraderie in my work group.</p> <p>GPW7: The culture of my organization reflects that of a <i>great place to work</i>.</p> <p>GPW8: My organization's ways of doing things reflects those of a <i>great place to work</i>.</p> <p>GPW9: I feel a sense of pride about the contribution that my organization makes to society.</p> <p>GPW10: I do not enjoy working in this organization.</p> <p>GPW11: Working in this organization adds to my happiness.</p> <p>GPW12: I think working in this organization contributes positively to my health.</p> <p>GPW13: As far as I know my organization is performing well financially</p>	<p>0.62</p> <p>0.83</p> <p>0.69</p> <p>0.84</p> <p>0.62</p> <p>0.62</p> <p>0.91</p> <p>0.89</p> <p>0.84</p> <p>0.72</p> <p>0.87</p> <p>0.69</p> <p>0.51</p>	<p>GPW2: I can’t think of a better place to work than my current organization.</p> <p>GPW3: Given the opportunity to move to another organization I would readily do so.</p> <p>GPW4: I would rate my organization at the top of list of places to work.</p> <p>GPW5: I feel proud to work in this organization.</p> <p>GPW6: Working in this organization adds to my happiness.</p> <p>GPW7: I do not enjoy working in this organization.</p>	<p>0.77</p> <p>0.61</p> <p>0.85</p> <p>0.88</p> <p>0.90</p> <p>0.76</p>	<p>GPW2: I can’t think of a better place to work for than my current organization.</p> <p>GPW3: I would prefer to stay in my current organization even if I have the opportunity to move to another one.</p> <p>GPW4: I would rate my organization at the top of list of places to work.</p> <p>GPW5: Working in this organization adds to my happiness.</p> <p>GPW6: I feel proud to work in this organization.</p> <p>GPW7: I enjoy working in this organization.</p>

Appendix 11: List of Review Sessions to Develop and Refine the Scale Items

Sl.	Person	Date	Survey
1	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	5 th October, 2016	Pilot 1
2	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	19 th October, 2016	Pilot 1
3	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	31 st October, 2016	Pilot 1
4	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	21 st November, 2016	Pilot 1
5	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	14 th December, 2016	Pilot 1
6	Kim Ceulemans, Post-doctoral Fellow	1 st January, 2017	Pilot 1
7	Arya Hun, Post-doctoral Fellow	1 st January, 2017	Pilot 1
8	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	9 th January, 2017	Pilot 1
9	Rick Cotton, Dissertation Committee Member	2 nd February, 2017	Pilot 1
10	Kim Ceulemans, Post-doctoral Fellow	15 th February, 2017	Pilot 1
11	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	16 th February, 2017	Pilot 1
12	Wendy Mah, PhD Program Manager	20 th February, 2017	Pilot 2
13	Stacey Fitzsimmons, Faculty Member	23 rd February, 2017	Pilot 2
14	Uzay Damali, Faculty Member	4 th March, 2017	Pilot 2
15	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	8 th March, 2017	Pilot 2
16	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	25 th April, 2017	Pilot 2
17	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	8 th May, 2017	Pilot 2
18	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	31 st May, 2017	Main Survey
19	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	7 th June, 2017	Main Survey
20	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	6 th July, 2017	Main Survey
21	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	11 th July, 2017	Main Survey
22	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	18 th July, 2017	Main Survey
23	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	10 th August, 2017	Main Survey
24	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	17 th August, 2017	Main Survey
25	Rick Cotton, Dissertation Committee Member	18 th August, 2017	Main Survey
26	A. R. Elangovan, Dissertation Committee Chair	28 th August, 2017	Main Survey

Appendix 12: The Main Survey Instrument

Wave 1 of 3

I work in the following industry*:

* In case you work in more than one industry please select the one where you work for most hours.

- Advertising
- Agriculture
- Airlines
- Banking
- Call center
- Chemicals
- Clothing
- Construction
- Consultancy
- Dairy
- ... 19 additional choices hidden ...
- Social services
- Steel
- Telecom
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Warehousing
- Web Hosting
- Other infrastructure
- Other manufacturing
- Other services

I work in the following type of organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Private
- Public (those owned by the government)

The size of the organization* in which I work is:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Small (up to 99 employees)
- Medium (100 to 499 employees)
- Large (500 or more employees)

I have worked in the organization* for:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Less than a month

- 1-6 months
- 1-3 years
- Over 3 Years

I work _____ in the organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Full-time
- Part-time

I am a _____ worker in the organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Paid
- Voluntary

Wave 1 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I think my organization* is a Great Place to Work.

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

I think an organization is a Great Place to Work when ...

Please complete the sentence.

Wave 1 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your work:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I think my abilities are a good match for the requirements of my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I am the right type of person for this type of work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I have the right set of knowledge for my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The work that I do matches well with my interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. There is a good match between my skills and those necessary for my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. My personality is a good match for my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Wave 1 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your supervisor:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. My supervisor's work ethic are similar to those of mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I think my supervisor's worldviews are similar to those of mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The approach I have towards work is similar to that of my supervisor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My supervisor provides me with sufficient flexibility in how I do my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I think my supervisor provides me adequate guidance to do my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that my supervisor also values in my work.
7. I like the way my supervisor interacts with me.

Wave 1 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to the people you work with:

- | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Neutral | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. I get along well with most of the people I normally interact with in my work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. I think most of the people I normally work with have worldviews similar to those of mine. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Most of the people I normally work with have similar commitment towards work as I do. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My abilities are a good match with most of the people with whom I normally interact in my work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Most of the people I normally work with are similar to me in how they approach work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that most of the people I normally work with also value in my work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. My personality is a good match with most of the people I normally work with. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Wave 1 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I like the way things are done in my organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The support I get from my organization is consistent with my needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The rewards I gain from being a part of my organization are as per my expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The things that I value in my work are similar to those that my organization also values in my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. My abilities match my organization's needs for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The culture of my organization is a good match for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. My organization has the kind of reputation that I like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. The purpose of my organization is what I would like it to be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Wave 1 of 3

How important is your relationship with your work, your supervisor, the people you normally work with, and your organization*? Please drag the button to a position on the slider bar that reflects your view.

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

Relationship with your work

Relationship with your supervisor

Relationship with the people you normally work with

Relationship with your organization

My MTurk Worker ID is (please also use this as your survey completion code):

Wave 2 of 3

I work in the following department in my organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Accounting
- Administration
- Analysis
- Audit
- Business development
- Collections
- Commercial
- Communications
- Compliance
- Customer care
- ... 11 additional choices hidden ...
- Research and development
- Risk
- Sales
- Security
- Service delivery
- Strategy
- Sustainability
- Technology
- Training
- Other

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your work*:

* Work signifies the task(s) that you perform.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I can be myself when I do my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The work I do is very important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My work serves a greater purpose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. My work provides me fulfilment.
5. I feel a connection with my work.

Wave 2 of 3

Based on the information provided in the Scenario Description to what extent do you think Pat would agree with the following statements relating to her work environment* and her organization:

* Work environment signifies the setting (people and place) in which you perform your work.

- | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Neutral | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. I cherish the environment in my organization. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. I feel that the environment in my organization allows me to be myself. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Being a part of my organization means a lot to me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I feel a connection with the people in my organization. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. I think that my organization serves a greater purpose. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Being a part of my organization provides me a sense of fulfilment. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Wave 2 of 3

Which of the following statements best describes your work?

- My work is only a job that helps me to pay the bills.

- My work is a career that provides me growth opportunities.
- My work is my calling or the purpose of my life.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your work:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I really "throw" myself into my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Sometimes I am so into my work that I lose track of time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My work is all consuming; I am totally into it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I am highly engaged in this work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I willingly give time to help others who have work-related problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I adjust my work schedule to accommodate other employees' requests for time off.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I give up time to help others who have work or non-work problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I assist others with their duties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Wave 2 of 3

I think I can find another job, similar or better than my current one, in the following number of months:

- Less than a month
- 1-6 months
- 1-3 years
- Over 3 Years

If I quit my job and not join another one - I think I can sustain my current standard of living for the following number of months:

- Less than a month
- 1-6 months
- 1-3 years
- Over 3 Years

My gender is:

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

The highest degree or level of school that I have completed is:

- None
- Junior school
- Middle school
- High school
- Trade/technical/vocational degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Professional designation
- Master's degree
- Doctorate degree
- Other

I belong to the following age group:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or Above
- Prefer Not to Answer

My MTurk Worker ID is (please use your MTurk Worker ID also as your survey completion code):
(Please ensure to write your MTurk Worker ID correctly. I will use the Worker ID to link your current responses to your responses in Wave 1 of the survey. Your Wave 2 responses will not serve

any purpose, and the assignment will be rejected, if I am unable to link it to your responses in Wave 1 of the survey. Thank you for your understanding.)

Wave 3 of 3

The following level in the organization* best describes my current work position:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

- Entry level (less than 3 years)
- Entry level (3 years or more)
- Middle management
- Top management

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your work, your work environment, and your organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I can't think of a better place to work for than my current organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I would prefer to stay in my current organization even if I have the opportunity to move to another one.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I would rate my organization at the top of list of places to work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Working in this organization adds to my happiness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I feel proud to work in this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I enjoy working in this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I think working in this organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

contributes positively to my health.

8. I am proud of the contribution that my organization makes to society.

9. I think there is a high level of trust among the people with whom I work.

10. I think there is a high level of camaraderie among the people with whom I work.

11. My work and my work environment has most of the characteristics that I think are important in a Great Place to Work.

12. I think the leadership in my organization is like that of a Great Place to Work.

13. The culture of my organization reflects that of a Great Place to Work.

14. My organization's ways of doing things reflects those of a Great Place to Work.

15. As far as I know my organization is performing well financially.

Wave 3 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your organization*:

* In case you work in more than one organization please consider the organization where you work for most hours.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I would be happy to work at my organization till I retire.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I really feel that problems faced by my organization are also my problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I feel personally attached to my work organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I attend functions that are not required but that help the organizational image.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I take action to protect the organization from potential problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I defend the organization when other employees criticize it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Wave 3 of 3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to your job*:

* In case you hold multiple jobs please consider the one where you spend the most time.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. All things considered, I am extremely satisfied with my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. In general I like my job very much.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Knowing what I know, if I had to decide all over again, I would take this job without hesitation.
4. If a good friend of mine told me that she/he was interested to work in a job like mine for my employer I would strongly recommend it.
5. My current job is close to my ideal one.
6. My job is very much like the job I wanted when I took it.

I spent most/all of my life in the following country:

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- ... 172 additional choices hidden ...
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

I identify with two or more cultures:

For example, do you consider yourself to be a French-Canadian or a Chinese-American or an Indian-Australian?

- Yes
- No

Wave 3 of 3

My MTurk Worker ID is (please use your MTurk Worker ID also as your survey completion code):
(Please ensure to write your MTurk Worker ID correctly. I will use the Worker ID to link your current responses to your responses in Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the survey. Your Wave 3 responses will not serve any purpose, and the assignment will be rejected, if I am unable to link it to your responses in Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the survey. Thank you for your understanding.)

I would like to receive a report on the findings of this research at the following email address:
As mentioned in the Survey instructions, please leave your email address in case you are interested to learn about the research findings. Your email address will be stored separately from your survey responses and it will not be possible to trace your email address back to your survey responses.

Appendix 13: The Scenario Descriptions

Scenario 1

Pat is an accountant in a telecommunications company. Her company regularly launches new innovative telecommunication services. Pat likes the challenges of developing accounting policies for such new services. She gets to draw from her knowledge of accounting standards. Her perseverance, eye for details, and systematic approach helps her to formulate well-rounded accounting policies. She has in fact been given the “employee of the month award” on a couple of occasions. Pat is glad that her work helps other departments of the telecommunications company to keep track of their performance. She is also pleased that her work makes a contribution to the accounting profession. Occasionally she writes columns in the Chartered Accountant journal, sharing information about how she pushed the boundaries of accounting. Most importantly, Pat is content that there is no pretense in her work.

Pat and her supervisor, Chris, agree that the role of an accountant is mainly to provide support and not to police other departments. Pat finds that like her Chris considers integrity as one of the most important qualities in a person. Pat likes Chris for his hands-off management style, for the sincerity with which he deals with his work, for the advice he provides when sought, and for the civility in the way he deals with his subordinates. Pat also appreciates Chris’s positive attitude.

Pat feels comfortable in the midst of her co-workers. She likes it that her co-workers are dedicated to their work and perform their duties with integrity. Pat appreciates the positive energy with which her co-workers take on challenges. She feels that her co-workers strongly believe in her organization’s priority to promote respectfulness and practice respectfulness towards each other. She finds that her contribution at work adds to those of her co-workers.

Pat also likes how her organization is transparent in its communications, makes efforts to promote fairness, and tries to ensure the development of the careers of their employees. Pat thinks that she is able to make a contribution to her company and that her remuneration is fair. She is also proud that the company's business brings people closer by easing communication. Finally, Pat likes it that her company is respected by her friends and family.

Scenario 2

Pat is an accountant in a telecommunications company. Her company regularly launches new innovative telecommunication services. Pat likes the challenges of developing accounting policies for such new services. She gets to draw from her knowledge of accounting standards. Her perseverance, eye for details, and systematic approach helps her to formulate well-rounded accounting policies. She has in fact been given the "employee of the month award" on a couple of occasions. Pat is glad that her work helps other departments of the telecommunications company to keep track of their performance. She is also pleased that her work makes a contribution to the accounting profession. Occasionally she writes columns in the Chartered Accountant journal, sharing information about how she pushed the boundaries of accounting. Most importantly, Pat is content that there is no pretense in her work.

However, Pat and her supervisor, Chris, disagree on the role of an accountant. While Pat thinks that the main function of accounting is to provide support to operations, her supervisor, Chris, thinks that the role of accountants are to police other departments. Pat finds that unlike her Chris does not mind manipulating accounting policies, especially if the CEO requests. She also dislikes Chris for his micro management, for his tendency to want to get things done quickly without enough care for quality, for the vagueness with which he responds when asked for advice,

and for the uncivil ways in which he communicates with his subordinates. In general, Pat feels suffocated due to Chris's negative attitude.

Pat also feels uncomfortable in the midst of her co-workers. She thinks that her co-workers are not dedicated to their work and do not perform their duties with integrity. Pat dislikes the resistance from her co-workers towards any change. She also thinks that her co-workers do not believe in her organization's priority to promote respectfulness and do not practice respectfulness towards each other. Pat finds that her contribution at work often does not complement that of her co-workers.

She also thinks that she is unable to contribute to her company in the way that it wants her to. Pat dislikes the lack of transparency, meritocracy, and career planning in her organization. Her remuneration is low compared to her counterparts working with her organization's competitors. Pat wished that her company invested in research and development, and contributed more towards improving the telecommunications sector. Finally, Pat is not proud to discuss about her organization with her friends and family.

Scenario 3

Pat is an accountant in a telecommunications company. Recently she was transferred to the risk management department where she needs to put systems in place that reduce the business risks encountered by the company. In this new role she needs to coordinate with the marketing, technical and services departments, and rarely uses her knowledge of accounting. Her perseverance, eye for details, and structured approach leads to confrontations as it slows down the speed with which the marketing department wishes to launch new services. She is uncomfortable at dealing with these confrontations. At times Pat needs to resort to pretense to get her way. She is generally unhappy

in her new role. There is a nagging doubt in her mind about whether she is making any significant contribution, especially to the profession of accounting. She no longer looks forward to her work.

However, Pat and her supervisor, Chris, get along well. They agree that Pat's work is mainly to provide support to other department and not to police them. Pat finds that like her Chris considers integrity as one of the most important qualities in a person. Pat likes Chris for his hands-off management style, for the sincerity with which he deals with his work, for the advice he provides when sought, and for the civility in the way he deals with his subordinates. Pat also appreciates Chris's positive attitude.

Pat mostly feels comfortable in the midst of her co-workers. She likes it that her co-workers are dedicated to their work and perform their duties with integrity. Pat appreciates the positive energy with which her co-workers take on challenges. She feels that her co-workers strongly believe in her organization's priority to promote respectfulness and practice respectfulness towards each other. She finds that her contribution at work adds to those of her co-workers.

Pat also likes how her organization is transparent in its communications, makes efforts to promote fairness, and tries to ensure the development of the careers of their employees. Pat thinks that she is able to make some contribution to her company and also that her remuneration is fair. She is proud that the company's business brings people closer by easing communication. Finally, Pat likes it that her company is respected by her friends and family.

Scenario 4

Pat is an accountant in a telecommunications company. Recently she was transferred to the risk management department where she needs to put systems in place that reduce the business risks encountered by the company. In this new role she needs to coordinate with the marketing, technical

and services departments, and rarely uses her knowledge of accounting. Her perseverance, eye for details, and structured approach leads to confrontations as it slows down the speed with which the marketing department wishes to launch new services. She is uncomfortable at dealing with these confrontations. At times Pat needs to resort to pretense to get her way. She is generally unhappy in her new role. There is a nagging doubt in her mind about whether she is making any significant contribution to the company and to the profession of accounting. She no longer looks forward to her work.

Pat and her supervisor, Chris, disagree on the role of an accountant. While Pat thinks that the main function of accounting is to provide support to operations, her supervisor, Chris, thinks that the role of accountants are to police other departments. Pat finds that unlike her Chris does not mind manipulating accounting policies, especially if the CEO requests. She also dislikes Chris for his micro management, for his tendency to want to get things done quickly without enough care for quality, for the vagueness with which he responds when asked for advice, and for the uncivil ways in which he communicates with his subordinates. In general, Pat feels suffocated due to Chris's negative attitude.

Pat also feels uncomfortable in the midst of her co-workers. She thinks that her co-workers are not dedicated to their work and do not perform their duties with integrity. Pat dislikes the resistance from her co-workers towards any change. She also thinks that her co-workers do not believe in her organization's priority to promote respectfulness and do not practice respectfulness towards each other. Pat finds that her contribution at work often does not complement that of her co-workers.

She also thinks that she is unable to contribute to her company in the way that it wants her to. Pat dislikes the lack of transparency, meritocracy, and career planning in her organization. Her remuneration is low compared to her counterparts working with her organization's competitors. Pat wished that her company invested in research and development, and contributed towards improving the telecommunications sector. Finally, Pat is not proud to speak about her organization with her friends and family.

Appendix 14: List of Questions Used in the Structured Interviews (Study 3)

Sl.	The Question	The Motivation
1.	In general, when do you consider an organization to be a <i>great place to work</i> ?	To gather more data about the outcome variable (Employees' perception of a <i>great place to work</i>)
2.	What is it that you find most meaningful in your life (maybe a stimulus/event/activity/relationships)? Why?	To understand more about meaning making and to orient the interviewee to the forthcoming questions
3.	When do you find meaning <i>in</i> work or when do you find your work meaningful? Why? (after explaining the distinction between meaning <i>in</i> work and meaning <i>at</i> work, i.e., between meaning attached to the work itself and to the work environment)	To understand more about meaning <i>in</i> work
4.	When do you find meaning <i>at</i> work or when do you find your work environment meaningful? Why?	To understand more about meaning <i>at</i> work
5.	Do you think there is an association between meaning <i>in</i> work and meaning <i>at</i> work? Why? Does one have more influence on you or are they equally influential? Why?	To understand more about the positive association between meaning <i>in</i> and <i>at</i> work observed in Study 2
6.	For a <i>great place to work</i> do you think meaning <i>in</i> work/a meaningful work or meaning <i>at</i> work/a meaningful work environment is more important? Why? (In case the interviewer answers meaning <i>in</i> work share that the data suggests otherwise and ask why you think that is the case).	To understand more about the significant positive association between meaning <i>at</i> work and <i>great places to work</i> observed in Study 2
7.	Data indicates that we have a high meaning <i>in</i> work when our work provides us fulfilment, we feel connected to our work, we think that our work is important and serves a greater purpose, and we can be authentic/ourselves during the work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>in</i> work? Why?	To understand more about the concept of meaning <i>in</i> work
8.	Data indicates that we have a high meaning <i>at</i> work when being part of the organization means a lot to us, provides us fulfilment, we feel a strong sense of belongingness, we cherish the work environment, we feel connected to the people at work, we can be ourselves at work, and the organizations serves a greater purpose. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>at</i> work? Why?	To understand more about the concept of meaning <i>at</i> work
9.	Data indicates that when we have a good fit with our work (there is a match between the person and the work in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, and interests) we find our work more meaningful or we attach more meaning	To understand more about the positive association between person-work fit and meaning <i>in</i> work observed in Study 2

	<i>in</i> work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>in</i> work? Why?	
10.	Data indicates that when we have a good fit with our supervisor (there is a match in terms of work ethic, worldviews, values, approach towards work, autonomy, guidance, and communications style) we find our work environment more meaningful or we attach more meaning <i>at</i> work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>at</i> work? Why?	To understand more about the positive association between person-supervisor fit and meaning <i>at</i> work observed in Study 2
11.	Data indicates that when we have a good fit with our work-group (there is a match in terms of worldviews, getting along, valuing the work, commitment towards work, abilities, approach towards work, personality) we find our work environment more meaningful or we attach more meaning <i>at</i> work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>at</i> work? Why?	To understand more about the association between person-group fit and meaning <i>at</i> work observed in Study 2
12.	Data indicates that when we have a good fit with our organization (there is a match in terms of culture, structure, support, values, reputation, purpose, and ways of doing things) we find our work environment more meaningful or we attach more meaning <i>at</i> work. Which of the dimensions do you think matters most/least in creating the meaning <i>at</i> work? Why?	To understand more about the positive association between person-organization fit and meaning <i>at</i> work observed in Study 2
13.	Person-supervisor, group (co-worker) and organization fits indicate an association with meaning <i>at</i> work. Do you think one is more important than the others? Why?	To understand more about fit salience
14.	After our discussion would you like to reconsider your response about when do you consider an organization to be a <i>great place to work</i> ?	To gather more data about the outcome variable (Employees' perception of a <i>great place to work</i>)

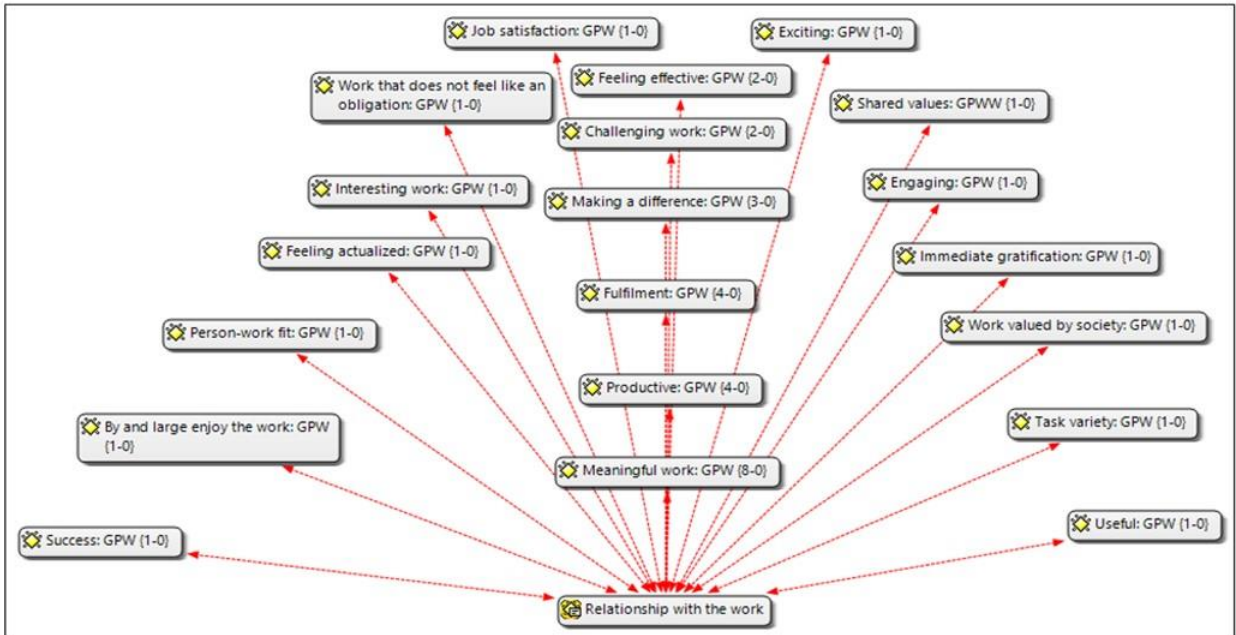
Appendix 15: Description of the Sample (Study 1)

Type of organization		Industry		Function		Gender		Bicultural		Age-group		Highest degree		Interview duration	
Private	13	Advertising	1	Administration	5	Female	14	No	23	20-25	1	College diploma	2	Total	18:32:36
Public	13	Agriculture	2	Business development	1	Male	12	Yes	3	25-30	8	Masters	11	Longest	1:43:51
Total	26	Banking	2	Information technology	1	Total	26	Total	26	30-35	6	PhD	3	Shortest	0:17:26
		Education	8	Operations	13					35-40	1	Undergraduate	10	Average	0:42:48
		Healthcare	4	Other	2					40-45	3	Total	26		
		Hospitality	1	Research and development	3					45-50	2				
		Information technology	2	Sales	1					50-55	1				
		Oil and gas	1	Total	26					55-60	2				
		Other services	4							60-65	1				
		Retail	1							70-75	1				
		Total	26							Total	26				

Appendix 16: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Work)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes
(Sub-theme: Relationship with the work; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)



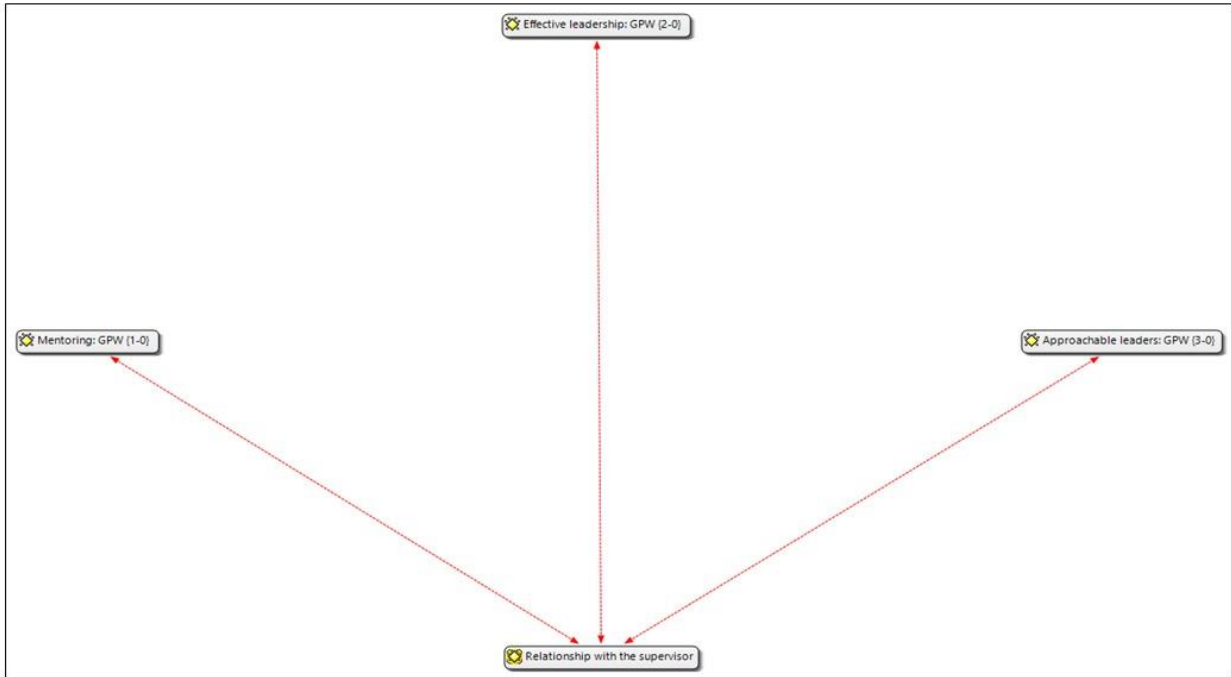
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 17: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Supervisor)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Relationship with the supervisor; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)



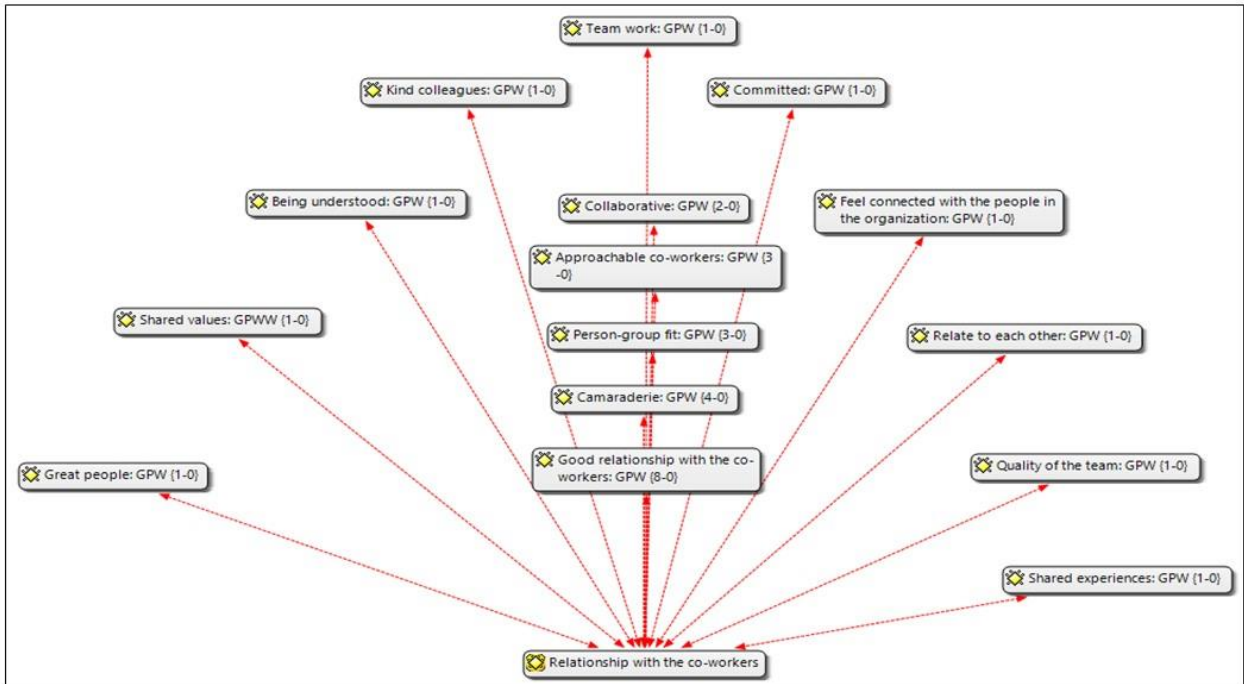
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 18: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Co-workers)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Relationship with the co-workers; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)

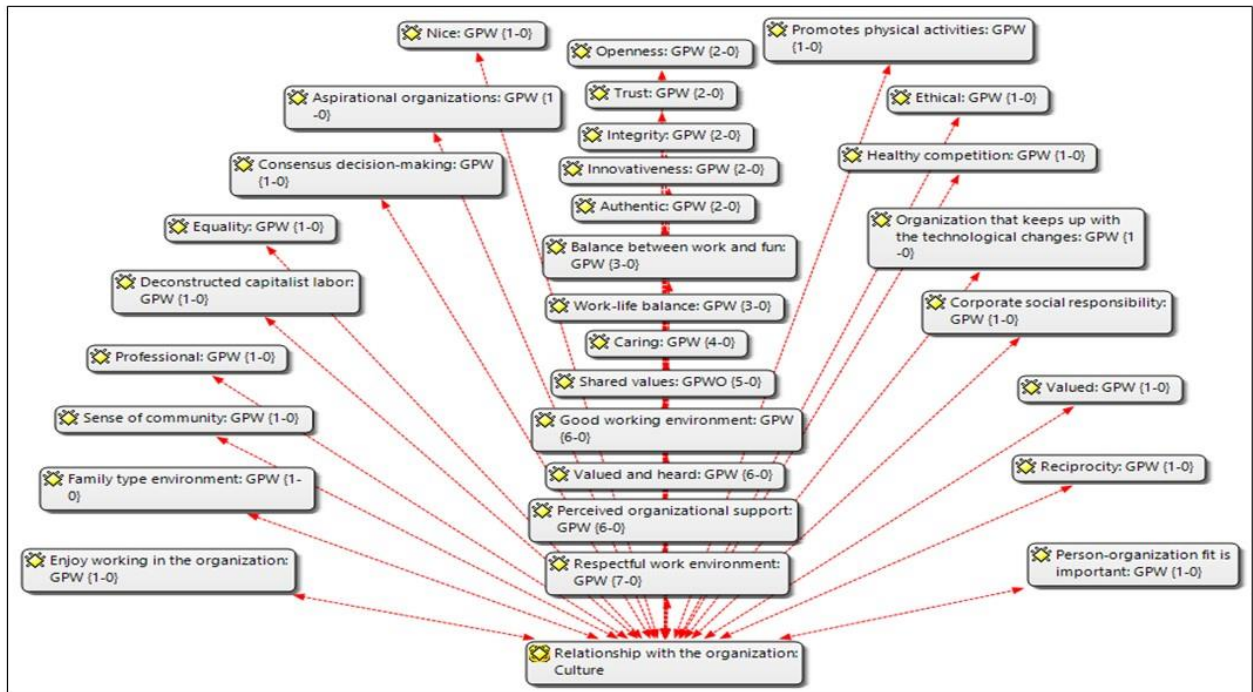


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 19: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Organizational Culture)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes
(Sub-theme: Relationship with the organization's culture; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)



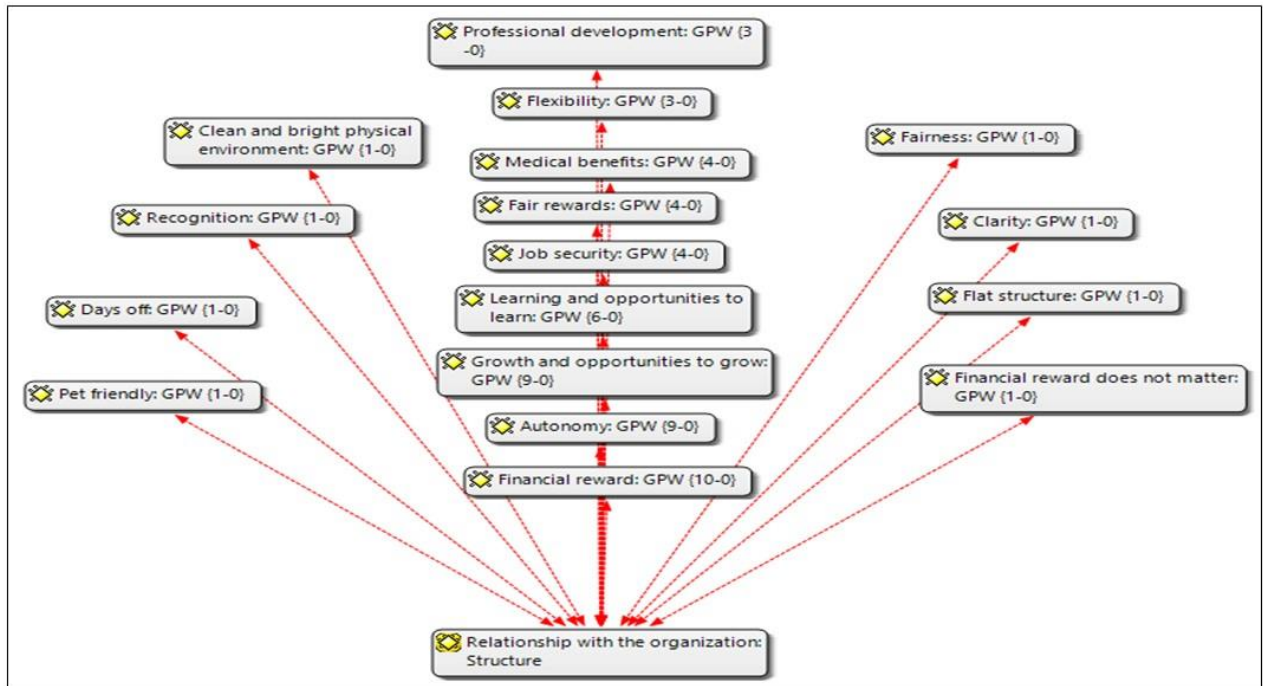
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 20: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Organizational Structure)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Relationship with the organizational structure; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)



The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

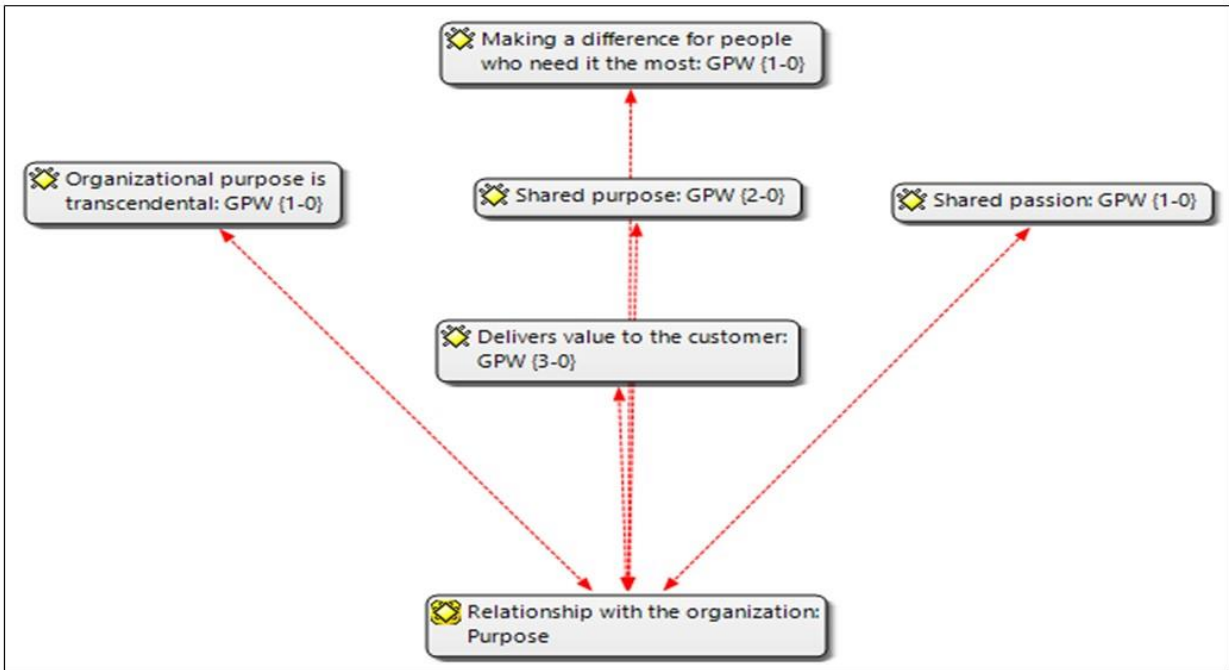
Appendix 21: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Organizational Purpose)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Relationship with the organizational purpose; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)

The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

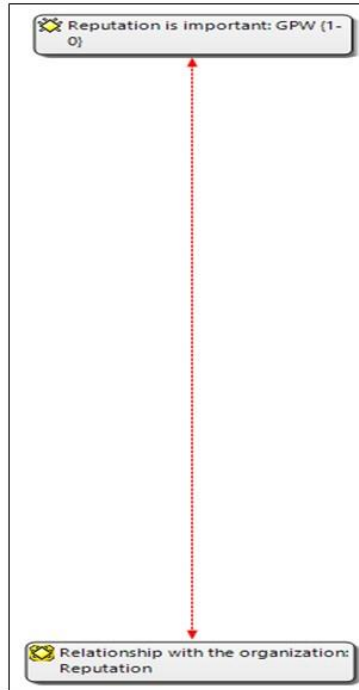


Appendix 22: Great Places to Work Codes (Relationship with Organizational Reputation)

Question 1: When do you consider an organization a great place to work/do you consider your current organization a great place to work?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Relationship with the organizational reputation; GPW denotes Great Places to Work)

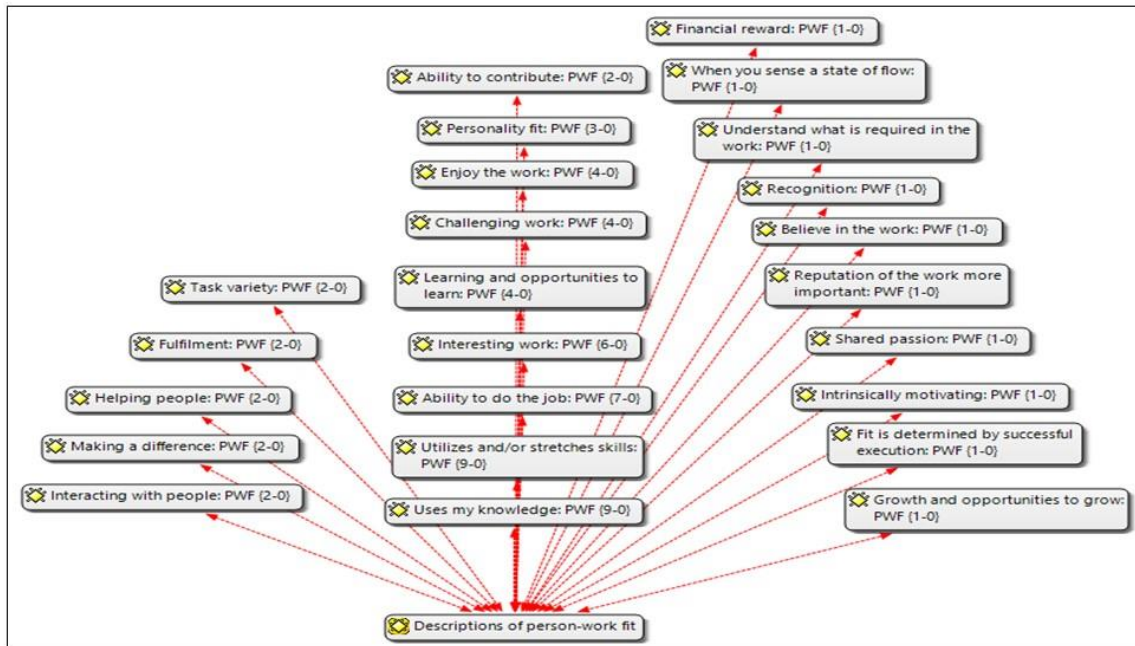


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 23: Person-Work Fit Codes

Question 2: Now I will divide the workplace into four components ... one is the task or the work itself ... second is the relationship with the boss or the supervisor or the leadership ... third is the relationship with the coworkers or the peers ... and fourth is the relationship with the organizations' culture, structure and reputation ... so my first question is ... when do you find the task or the work to be a good fit for you?

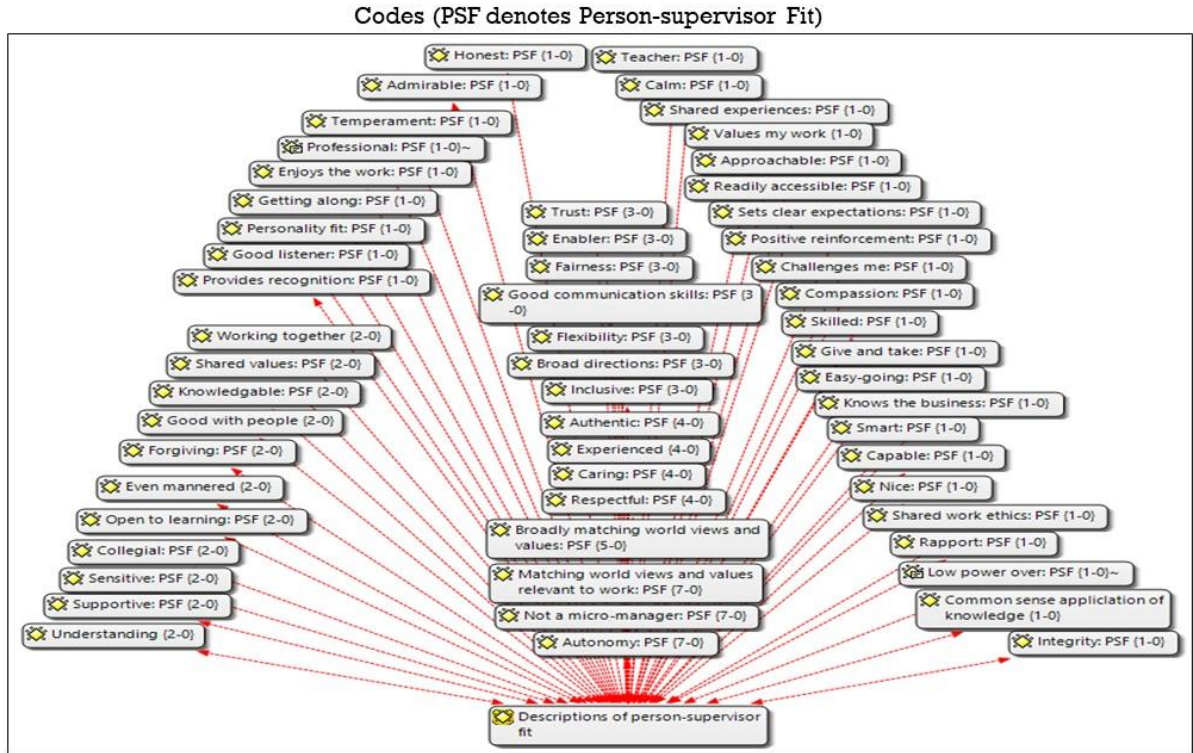
Codes (PWF denotes Person-work Fit)



The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 24: Person-Supervisor Fit Codes

Question 3: When do you consider your boss or your supervisor or the leadership to be a good fit for you?

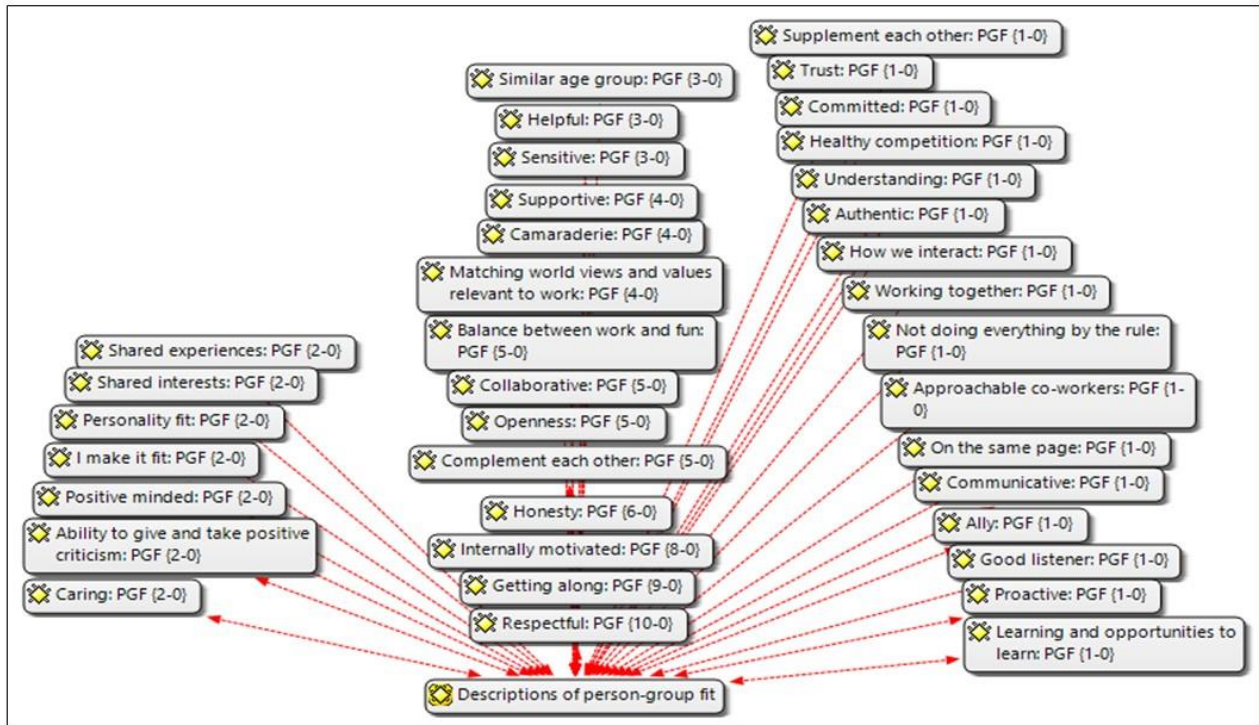


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 25: Person-Group Fit Codes

Question 4: When it comes to your co-workers when do you think they are a good fit for you?

Codes (PGF denotes Person-group Fit)

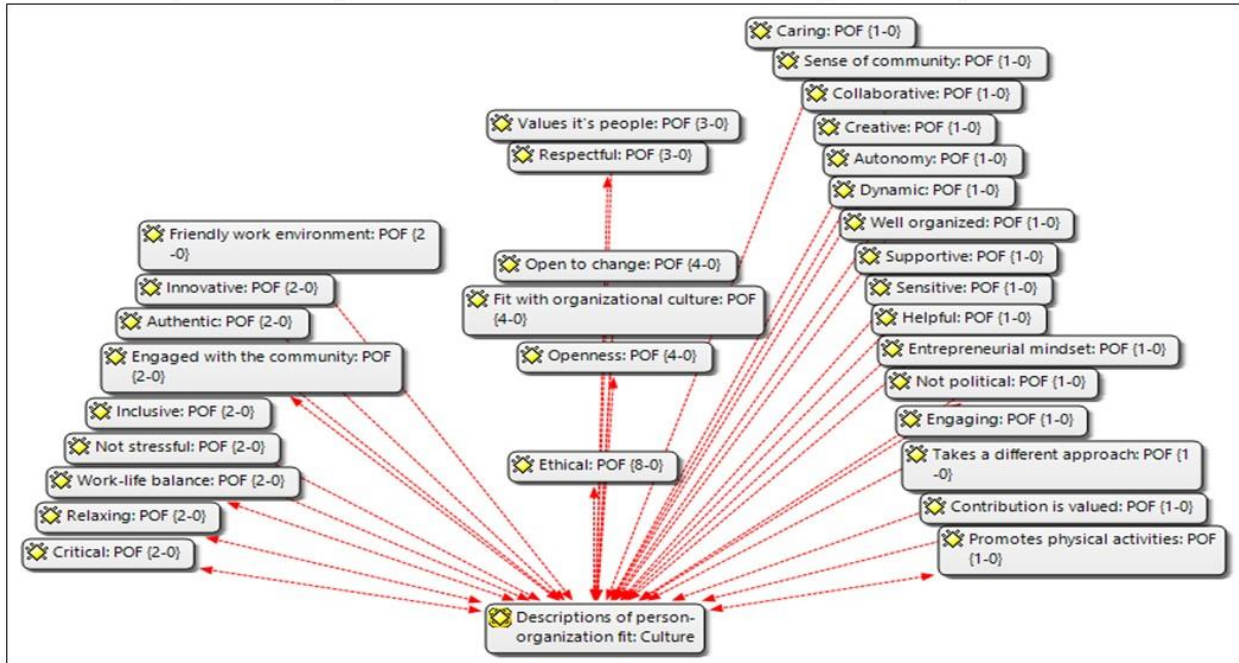


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 26: Person-Organization Fit Codes (Culture)

Question 5: So coming to the last component, when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you and may be you can frame your thinking in terms of the culture or the structure or the reputation of the organization?

Codes
(Sub-theme: Organizational culture; POF denotes Person-organization Fit)



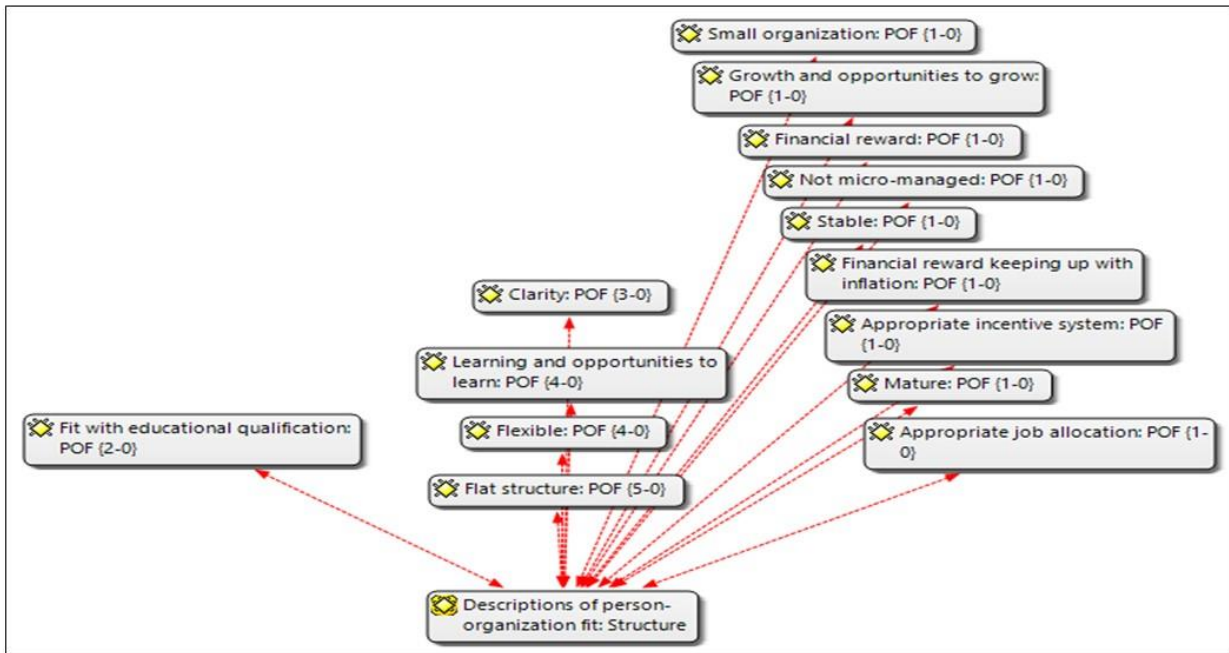
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 27: Person-Organization Fit Codes (Structure)

Question 5: So coming to the last component, when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you and may be you can frame your thinking in terms of the culture or the structure or the reputation of the organization?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Organizational structure; POF denotes Person-organization Fit)



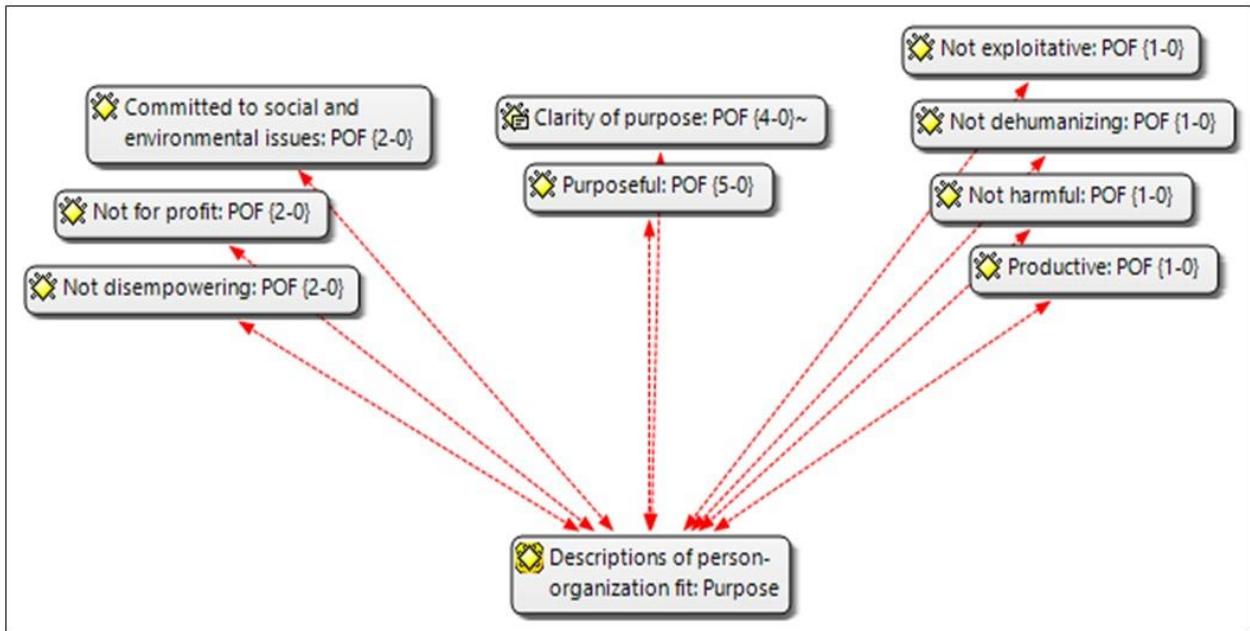
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 28: Person-Organization Fit Codes (Purpose)

Question 5: So coming to the last component, when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you and may be you can frame your thinking in terms of the culture or the structure or the reputation of the organization?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Organizational purpose; POF denotes Person-organization Fit)



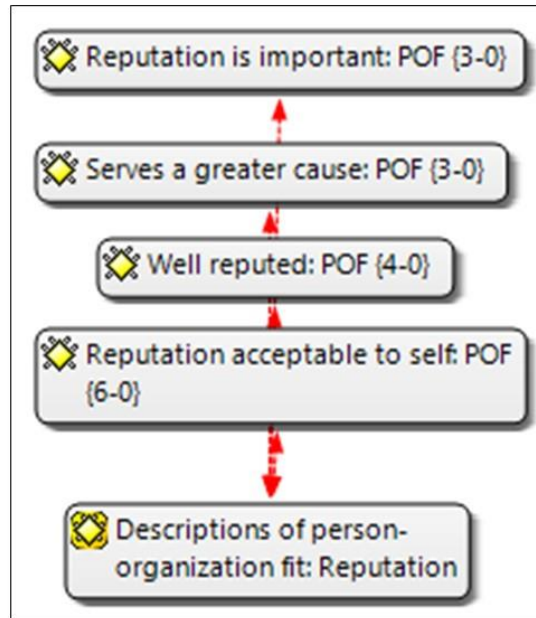
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 29: Person-Organization Fit Codes (Reputation)

Question 5: So coming to the last component, when do you consider an organization to be a good fit for you and may be you can frame your thinking in terms of the culture or the structure or the reputation of the organization?

Codes

(Sub-theme: Organizational reputation; POF denotes Person-organization Fit)

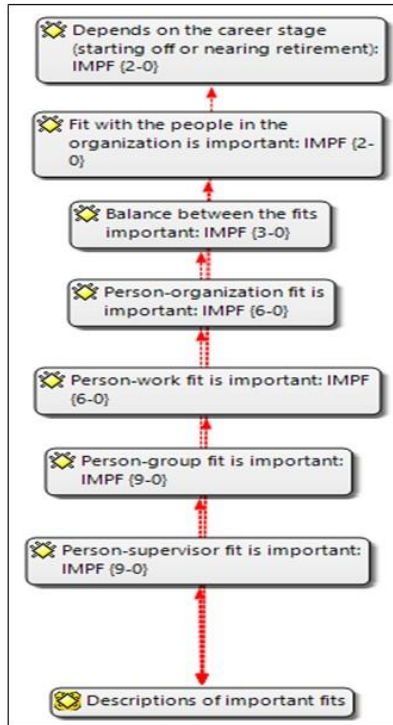


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 30: Fit Saliience Codes

Question 6: So ... I asked you about four kinds of fit ... work, leader, peers, and organizations ... which of these four fits is most important to you?

Codes (IMP denotes Importance of Fit)

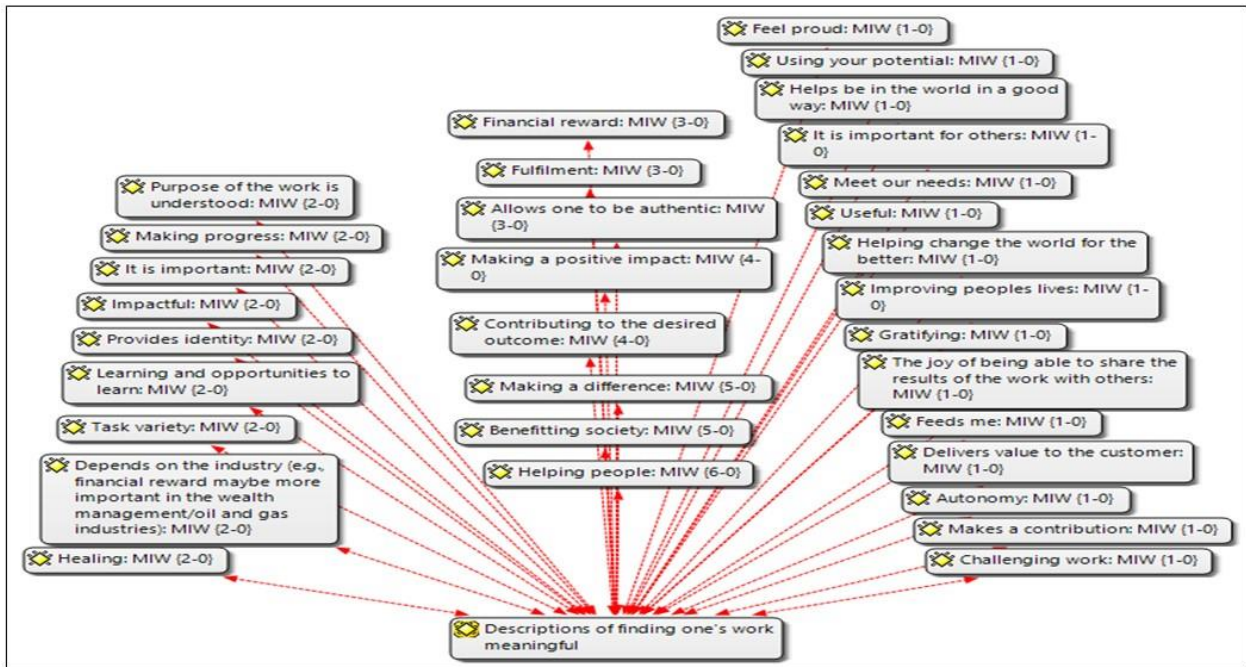


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 31: Meaning in Work Codes

Question 7: Now, I come to the meaning of work ... here I will divide the workplace in to two components ... one is the work itself and the second is the work environment, which includes supervisor, peers and the organization ... so, when is the work itself meaningful to you and what does meaningful mean to you (we label this meaning in work)?

Codes (MIW denotes Meaning in Work)

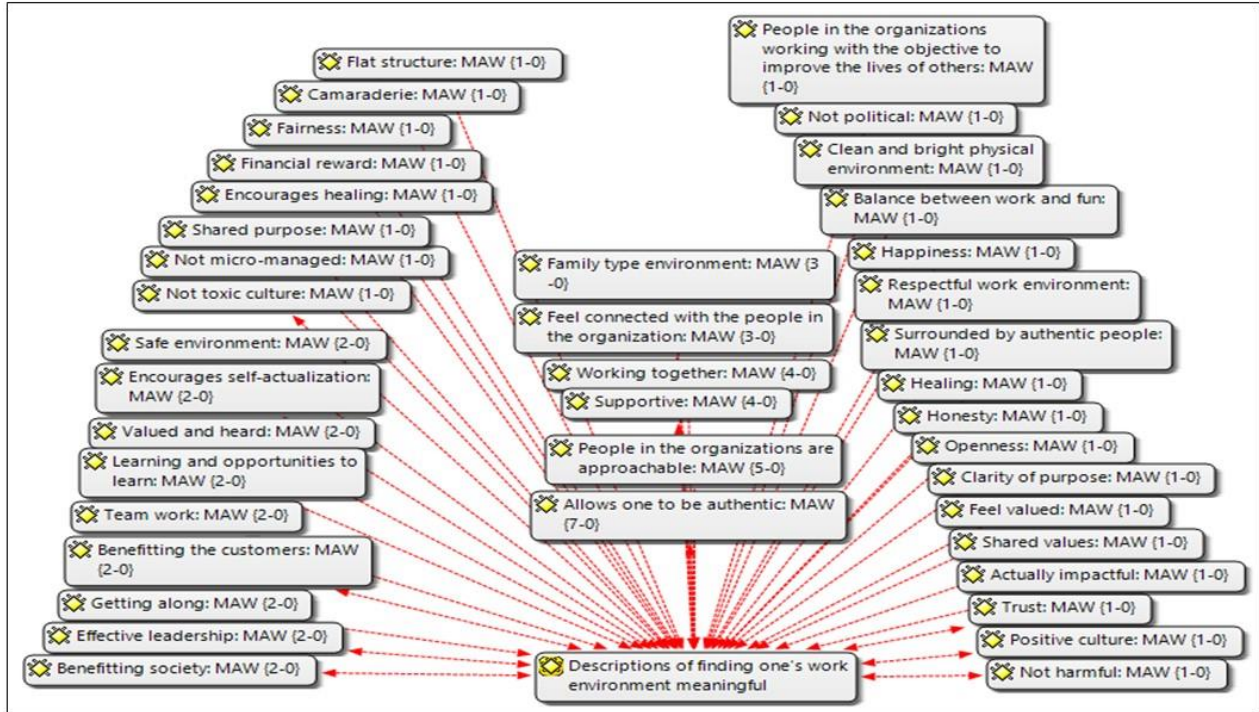


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 32: Meaning at Work Codes

Question 8: When do you find your work environment to be meaningful (we label this as meaning at work)?

Codes (MAW denotes Meaning at Work)



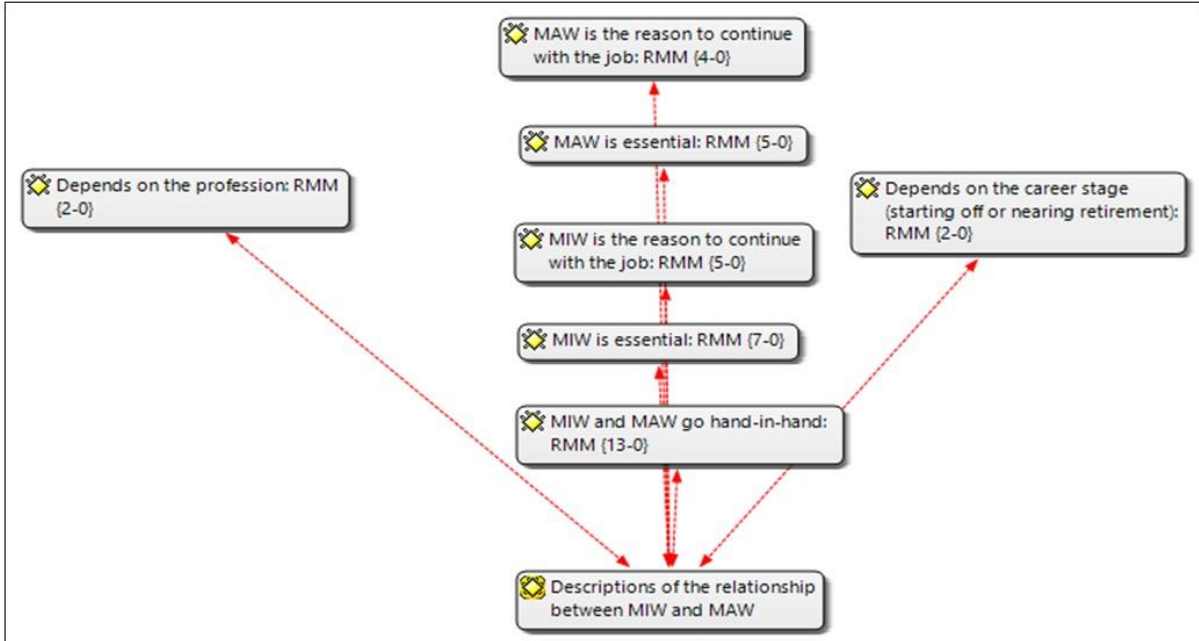
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 33: Relationship between Meaning in Work and Meaning at Work Codes

Question 9: So ... my next question is which is more important to you ... meaning in work or meaning at work, and why?

Codes

(MIW denotes Meaning *in* Work; MAW denotes Meaning *at* Work; RMM denotes Relationship between MIW and MAW)

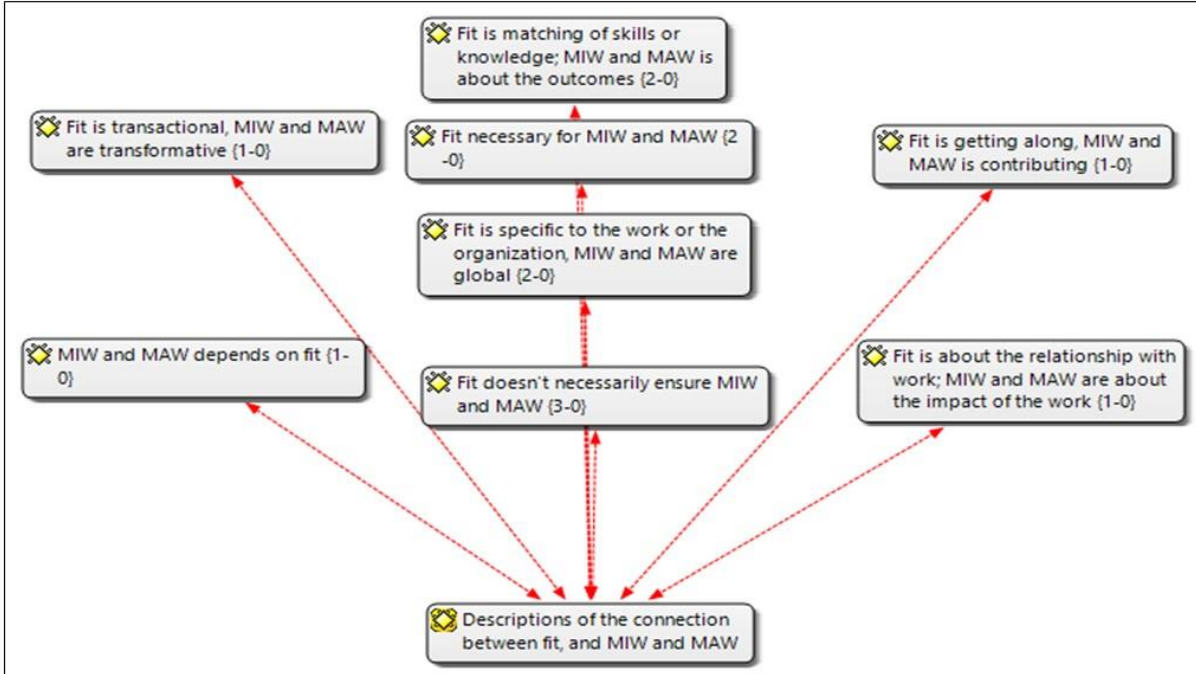


The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 34: Connection between Fit, and Meaning in and at Work Codes

Question 10: I asked you about fit and I asked you about meaning in work or meaning at work ... do you think that these two are distinct ... if so, in what way?

Codes
(MIW denotes Meaning *in* Work; MAW denotes Meaning *at* Work;)



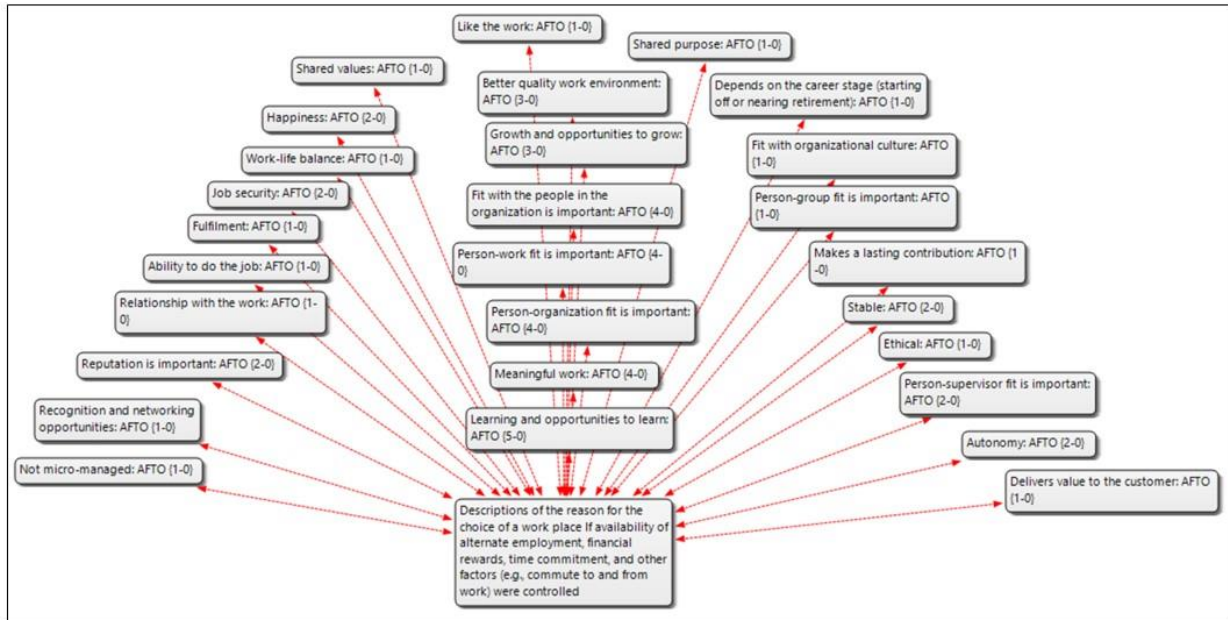
The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 35: Choice of Job among Alternatives Codes

Question 11: Suppose you have three different job offers and each one of them are comparable with regard to financial rewards, commitment of your time and other factors like commute from your place, etc. So ... in such a situation how would you decide which offer to accept?

Codes

(AFTO denotes Availability of alternate employment, Financial rewards, Time commitment, and Others)



The number in the bracket indicates the number of times I used the code in the responses to this particular question.

Appendix 36: Description of the Sample (Pilot Survey 1)

Type of organization			Size of the organization			Industry			Function			Experience in current organization			Level in current organization		
Private	38	40%	Large (500 or more employees)	65	68%	Agriculture	2	2%	Administration	9	9%	Less than a month	1	1%	Entry level (3 years or more)	32	34%
Public	57	60%	Medium (100 to 499 employees)	11	12%	Banking	5	5%	Analysis	2	2%	1-6 months	16	17%	Entry level (less than 3 years)	36	38%
Total	95	100%	Small (up to 99 employees)	19	20%	Call center	1	1%	Business development	1	1%	1-3 years	41	43%	Middle management	21	22%
			Total	95	100%	Chemicals	1	1%	Commercial	1	1%	Over 3 Years	37	39%	Top management	6	6%
						Education	47	49%	Communications	2	2%	Total	95	100%	Total	95	100%
						Finance	1	1%	Compliance	2	2%						
						Healthcare	6	6%	Customer care	5	5%						
						Hospitality	2	2%	Finance	1	1%						
						Information technology	7	7%	Human resources	2	2%						
						Logistics	1	1%	Information technology	7	7%						
						Oil and gas	1	1%	Investment	1	1%						
						Other manufacturing	4	4%	Marketing	1	1%						
						Other services	8	8%	Operations	7	7%						
						Pharmaceutical	1	1%	Other	25	26%						
						Publishing	1	1%	Production planning	1	1%						
						Retail	1	1%	Project	1	1%						
						Social services	4	4%	Research and development	14	15%						
						Telecom	1	1%	Sales	4	4%						
						Warehousing	1	1%	Service delivery	3	3%						
						Total	95	100%	Strategy	2	2%						
									Training	4	4%						
									Total	95	100%						

Gender			Highest degree			Bicultural			Age-group			Ethnicity		
Female	40	42%	Bachelor's degree	18	19%	No	74	78%	18-24	4	4%	African American	1	1%
Male	52	55%	Doctorate degree	23	24%	Yes	21	22%	25-34	48	51%	Asian	24	25%
Other	1	1%	Master's degree	45	47%	Total	95	100%	35-44	25	26%	Caucasian	47	49%
Prefer not to answer	2	2%	Professional designation	4	4%				45-54	10	11%	Other	12	13%
Total	95	100%	Trade/technical/vocational degree	5	5%				55-64	7	7%	Prefer Not to Answer	4	4%
			Total	95	100%				Prefer Not to Answer	1	1%	Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	7	7%
									Total	95	100%	Total	95	100%

Appendix 37: Description of the Sample (Pilot Survey 2)

Type of organization			Size of the organization			Industry			Function			Experience in current organization			Level in current organization		
Private	133	54%	Large (500 or more employees)	165	67%	Advertising	2	1%	Accounting	16	6%	Less than a month	7	3%	Entry level (less than 3 years)	97	39%
Public	114	46%				Medium (100 to 499 employees)	36	15%	Airlines	1	0%				Administration	27	11%
Total	247	100%	Small (up to 99 employees)	46	19%	Banking	11	4%	Analysis	7	3%	1-3 years	65	26%	Middle management	79	32%
			Total	247	100%	Call center	2	1%	Audit	6	2%	Over 3 Years	120	49%	Top management	21	9%
						Chemicals	2	1%	Business development	9	4%	Total	247	100%	Total	247	100%
						Clothing	2	1%	Commercial	3	1%						
						Construction	3	1%	Communications	3	1%						
						Education	100	40%	Customer care	9	4%						
						Finance	16	6%	Finance	6	2%						
						Healthcare	7	3%	Human resources	7	3%						
						Hospitality	4	2%	Information technology	13	5%						
						Information technology	19	8%	Innovation	1	0%						
						Infrastructure	3	1%	Investment	1	0%						
						Logistics	1	0%	Marketing	7	3%						
						Media	3	1%	Multiple departments	11	4%						
						Mining	2	1%	Operations	16	6%						
						Oil and gas	1	0%	Other	43	17%						
						Other manufacturing	10	4%	Project	9	4%						
						Other services	27	11%	Public relations	2	1%						
						Pharmaceutical	2	1%	Research and development	12	5%						
						Publishing	1	0%	Sales	15	6%						
						Retail	10	4%	Service delivery	6	2%						
						Social services	2	1%	Strategy	7	3%						
						Telecom	12	5%	Sustainability	2	1%						
						Transportation	3	1%	Technology	5	2%						
						Utilities	1	0%	Training	4	2%						
						Total	247	100%	Total	247	100%						

Gender		
Female	111	45%
Male	128	52%
Other	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	8	3%
Total	247	100%

Formal education		
None	1	0%
High school	39	16%
Trade/technical/vocational degree	3	1%
Bachelor's degree	78	32%
Professional designation	15	6%
Master's degree	80	32%
Doctorate degree	30	12%
Other	1	0%
Total	247	100%

Bicultural		
Yes	97	39%
No	150	61%
Total	247	100%

Age-group		
18-24	71	29%
25-34	61	25%
35-44	53	21%
45-54	43	17%
55-64	11	4%
65 or Above	2	1%
Prefer Not to Answer	6	2%
Total	247	100%

Country where lived for the longest period		
Belgium	1	0%
Bhutan	1	0%
Brazil	3	1%
Canada	111	45%
China	13	5%
Colombia	1	0%
Costa Rica	1	0%
Czech Republic	1	0%
Denmark	3	1%
Finland	1	0%
France	4	2%
Germany	10	4%
Hong Kong	1	0%
India	51	21%
Italy	2	1%
Japan	7	3%
Korea, South	1	0%
Mexico	1	0%
New Zealand	1	0%
Peru	4	2%
Philippines	2	1%
Portugal	1	0%
Singapore	3	1%
Slovakia	1	0%
Slovenia	1	0%
Sweden	1	0%
Switzerland	1	0%
Thailand	1	0%
Turkey	1	0%
United Arab Emirates	1	0%
United Kingdom	1	0%
United States	14	6%
Vietnam	1	0%
Total	247	100%

Appendix 38: Schedule of the Surveys

Sl.	Survey Title	Start Date (Year: 2017)	End Date (Year: 2017)	Average time taken to fill out the survey	Number of items
1	Pilot 1	19 th February	15 th March	16 minutes	77
2	Pilot 2	10 th May	15 th August	17 minutes	95
3	Main Survey: Wave 1	31 st August	10 th September	4 minutes	39
4	Main Survey: Wave 2	12 th September	26 th September	3 minutes	27
5	Main Survey: Wave 3	27 th September	5 th October	3 minutes	31
6	Scenario Analysis	8 th November	23 rd November	6 minutes	54

Appendix 39: Description of the Sample (Main Survey)

Industry			Type of organization			Size of the organization			Department			Experience in current organization			Level in current organization		
Advertising	8	1.7%	Private	424	88%	Large (500 or more employees)	180	37%	Accounting	18	3.7%	Less than a month	2	0.4%	Entry level (less than 3 years)	95	20%
Agriculture	2	0.4%	Public	57	12%	Medium (100 to 499 employees)	127	26%	Administration	44	9.1%	1-6 months	33	6.9%	Entry level (3 years or more)	169	35%
Airlines	2	0.4%	Total	481	100%	Small (up to 99 employees)	174	36%	Analysis	4	0.8%	1-3 years	144	29.9%	Middle management	197	41%
Banking	9	1.9%				Total	481	100%	Audit	1	0.2%	Over 3 Years	302	62.8%	Top management	20	4%
Call center	12	2.5%							Business development	3	0.6%	Total	481	100.0%	Total	481	100%
Chemicals	2	0.4%							Commercial	3	0.6%						
Clothing	1	0.2%							Communications	8	1.7%						
Construction	19	4.0%							Compliance	3	0.6%						
Consultancy	7	1.5%							Customer care	29	6.0%						
Education	49	10.2%							Finance	13	2.7%						
Entertainment	11	2.3%							Human resources	11	2.3%						
Finance	30	6.2%							Information technology	79	16.4%						
Healthcare	33	6.9%							Innovation	1	0.2%						
Hospitality	12	2.5%							Investment	1	0.2%						
Information technology	74	15.4%							Legal	10	2.1%						
Insurance	10	2.1%							Marketing	14	2.9%						
Logistics	6	1.2%							Multiple departments	15	3.1%						
Media	6	1.2%							Operations	39	8.1%						
Oil and gas	2	0.4%							Other	68	14.1%						
Other manufacturing	27	5.6%							Production planning	10	2.1%						
Other services	40	8.3%							Project	3	0.6%						
Packaging	2	0.4%							Public relations	2	0.4%						
Pharmaceutical	6	1.2%							Research and development	11	2.3%						
Publishing	6	1.2%							Sales	49	10.2%						
Real estate	10	2.1%							Security	2	0.4%						
Rental	2	0.4%							Service delivery	8	1.7%						
Research and Development	7	1.5%							Technology	24	5.0%						
Retail	47	9.8%							Training	8	1.7%						
Social services	10	2.1%							Total	481	100.0%						
Telecom	5	1.0%															
Transportation	11	2.3%															
Utilities	5	1.0%															
Warehousing	8	1.7%															
Total	481	100.0%															

Work salience		
Calling	61	13%
Career	230	48%
Job	190	40%
Total	481	100%

Gender		
Female	213	44.3%
Male	266	55.3%
Other	0	0.0%
Prefer not to answer	2	0.4%
Total	481	100.0%

Formal education		
None	0	0%
High school	84	17%
Trade/technical/vocational degree	68	14%
Bachelor's degree	235	49%
Professional designation	14	3%
Master's degree	74	15%
Doctorate degree	6	1%
Other	0	0%
Total	481	100%

Bicultural		
Yes	87	18%
No	394	82%
Total	481	100%

Age-group		
18-24	31	6.4%
25-34	219	45.5%
35-44	131	27.2%
45-54	53	11.0%
55-64	34	7.1%
65 or Above	12	2.5%
Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.2%
Total	481	100.0%

Country where lived for the longest period		
Canada	4	0.8%
Dominican Republic	1	0.2%
India	63	13.1%
Italy	2	0.4%
Mexico	1	0.2%
Netherlands	1	0.2%
Romania	1	0.2%
Singapore	1	0.2%
Spain	1	0.2%
Trinidad and Tobago	1	0.2%
Ukraine	1	0.2%
United Kingdom	1	0.2%
United States	402	83.6%
Uruguay	1	0.2%
Total	481	100.0%

Appendix 41: Regression Results of Pilot Surveys 1 and 2

Pilot Survey 1

Outcome variables →	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H3)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H3)	Great Places to Work
Number of observations	95	95	92	95	95	92	92	92	92
Meaning in Work			0.66***					0.72***	0.10
Meaning at Work						0.43***	0.24**		0.39***
Person-work Fit	0.62***	0.35***	0.08					0.04	-0.11
Person-supervisor Fit				0.24***	0.30***	0.19***	0.12		0.22***
Person-group Fit				0.41***	0.34***	0.22**	-0.13		0.26***
Person-organization Fit				0.54***	0.53***	0.27***	0.17		0.25***
Type of Organization Dummy (Public = 1)			-0.55**			-0.18	0.46**	-0.47	-0.21
Organizational Size Dummy (Small = 1)			-0.24			-0.02	0.25	-0.23	-0.08
Experience in Current Organization Dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)			0.10			0.18	0.20	-0.12	0.20
Level in Current Organization Dummy (Middle & Top Management = 1)			-0.46			-0.14	0.37	-0.29	-0.13
Work Salience Dummy (Callings = 1)			-0.39			0.17	1.08***	-0.55*	0.11
Gender Dummy (Male = 1)			-0.37			0.02	0.13	-0.49*	0.03
Education Dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)			-0.50			-0.11	0.66	-0.31	-0.17
Age Group Dummy (35+ years = 1)			0.62**			0.30**	-0.07	0.30	0.26**
Estimated Time Required to Find Alternate Job Dummy (1+ years = 1)			-0.47*			-0.21	0.08	-0.19	-0.19
Estimated Time One Could Survive Without A Job or Financial Strength Dummy (1+ years = 1)			-0.07			-0.17	-0.08	0.08	-0.16
Adjusted R squared	0.29	0.07	0.29	0.67	0.74	0.83	0.47	0.24	0.83

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

H: Hypothesis

Pilot Survey 2

Outcome variables →	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H3)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H3)	Great Places to Work
Number of observations	247	247	233	247	247	233	233	233	233
Meaning in Work			0.56***					0.52***	0.09
Meaning at Work						0.40***	0.37***		0.37***
Person-work Fit	0.91***	0.64***	0.10					0.11	0.00
Person-supervisor Fit				0.11**	0.20***	0.13**	0.10		0.12**
Person-group Fit				0.17***	0.10	-0.02	0.26***		-0.05
Person-organization Fit				0.65***	0.80***	0.55***	0.05		0.55***
Type of Organization Dummy (Public = 1)			0.14			0.15	0.12	0.03	0.14
Organizational Size Dummy (Small = 1)			-0.05			-0.20	-0.32**	0.19	-0.17
Experience in Current Organization Dummy (Up to 3 years = 1)			0.00			0.08	-0.05	-0.02	0.09
Level in Current Organization Dummy (Middle & Top Management = 1)			-0.28			0.05	0.51***	-0.08	0.00
Work Salience Dummy (Callings = 1)			0.09			0.33***	0.63***	-0.10	0.28**
Gender Dummy (Male = 1)			-0.16			-0.17*	0.02	0.00	-0.17*
Education Dummy (Bachelor's degree and more = 1)			-0.30			-0.20*	-0.01	-0.11	-0.20*
Age Group Dummy (35+ years = 1)			0.40**			0.23**	-0.08	0.14	0.24**
Estimated Time Required to Find Alternate Job Dummy (1+ years = 1)			0.28*			-0.05	-0.06	0.34***	-0.04
Estimated Time One Could Survive Without A Job or Financial Strength Dummy (1+ years = 1)			0.01			-0.08	0.10	0.16	-0.09
Adjusted R squared	0.45	0.20	0.40	0.63	0.68	0.76	0.52	0.41	0.76

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

H: Hypothesis

Appendix 42: Description of the Sample (Scenario Analysis)

Gender		
Female	172	43.1%
Male	224	56.1%
Other	1	0.3%
Prefer not to answer	2	0.5%
Total	399	100.0%

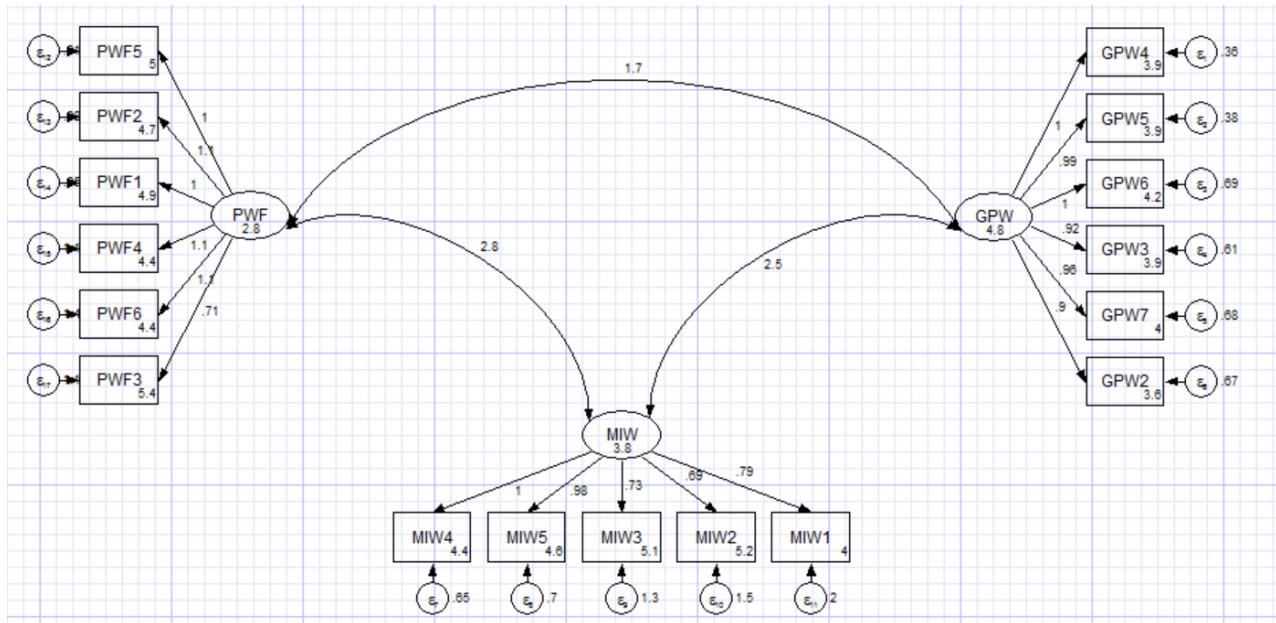
Formal education		
None	0	0%
High school	69	17%
Trade/technical/vocational degree	57	14%
Bachelor's degree	192	48%
Professional designation	11	3%
Master's degree	65	16%
Doctorate degree	5	1%
Other	0	0%
Total	399	100%

Age-group		
18-24	18	4.5%
25-34	173	43.4%
35-44	122	30.6%
45-54	45	11.3%
55-64	30	7.5%
65 or Above	10	2.5%
Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.3%
Total	399	100.0%

Country where lived for the longest period		
Canada	4	1.0%
China	1	0.3%
Germany	1	0.3%
India	48	12.0%
Italy	1	0.3%
Mexico	1	0.3%
Netherlands	1	0.3%
Singapore	1	0.3%
Spain	2	0.5%
United Kingdom	1	0.3%
United States	337	84.5%
Uruguay	1	0.3%
Total	399	100.0%

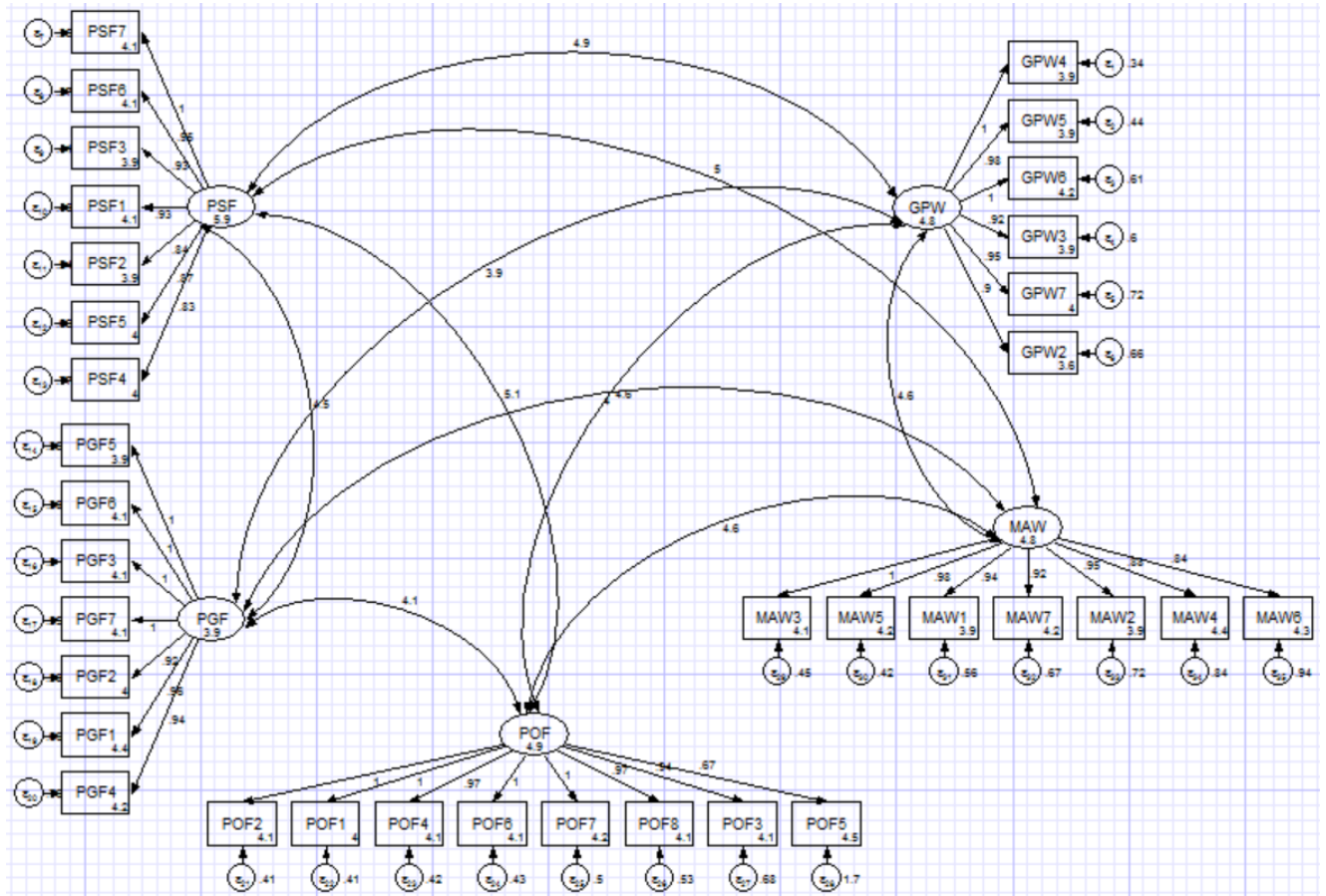
Appendix 43: SEM Estimates for Scenario Analysis

Hypothesis 1: Employees' perceived person-work fit is positively related with the employees' perceived *great place to work* through the mediation of meaning *in* work.



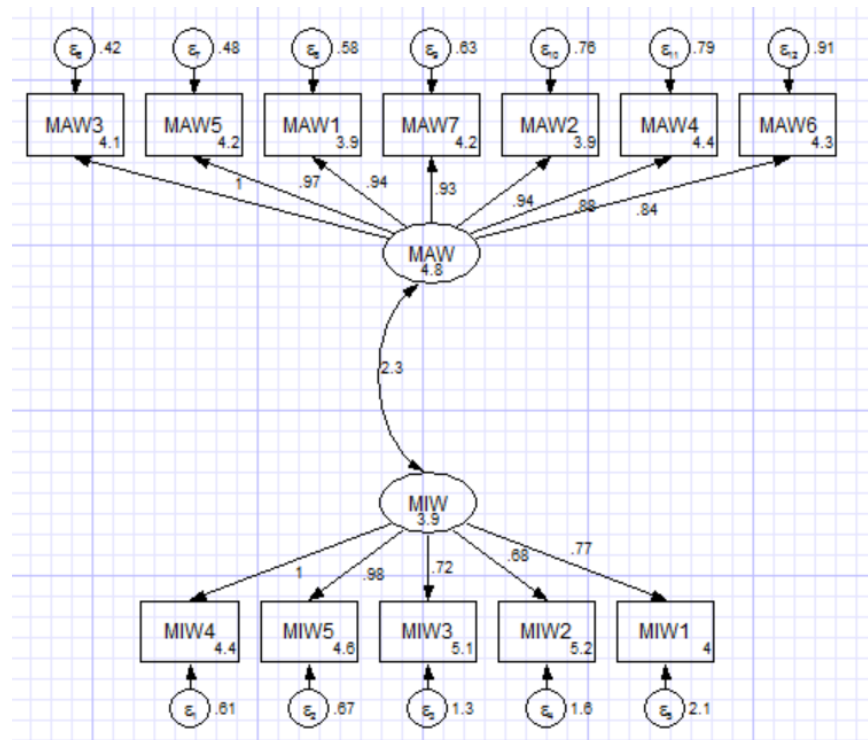
PWF: Person-work fit, MIW: Meaning *in* work; GPW: Employees' perception of a *great place to work*; the covariance between PWF, MIW and GPW are all significant ($p < 0.01$).

Hypothesis 2: Employees' perceived person-supervisor, person-group, and person-organization fit are positively related with the employees' perceived *great place to work* through the mediation of meaning *at work*.



PSF: Person-supervisor fit, PGF: Person-group fit, POF: Person-organization fit, MAW: Meaning *at work*; GPW: Employees' perception of a *great place to work*; the covariance between PSF, PGF, POF, MAW and GPW are all significant ($p < 0.01$).

Hypothesis 3: Meaning *in* work and meaning *at* work are positively related to each other.



MIW: Meaning *in* work, MAW: Meaning *at* work; the covariance between MIW and MAW is significant ($p < 0.01$).

Appendix 44: Regression Results of Scenario Analysis

Outcome variables →	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Great Places to Work (H1)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Great Places to Work (H2)	Meaning <i>in</i> Work (H3)	Meaning <i>at</i> Work (H3)	Great Places to Work
Number of observations	399	399	399	399	399	399	399	399	399
Meaning <i>in</i> Work			0.68***					0.63***	0.11***
Meaning <i>at</i> Work						0.51***	0.51***		0.45***
Person-work Fit	0.83***	0.58***	0.01					-0.00	-0.01
Person-supervisor Fit				0.16***	0.03	-0.05	-0.35***		-0.02
Person-group Fit				0.24***	0.08*	-0.03	-0.16		-0.05
Person-organization Fit				0.56***	0.84***	0.56***	0.15		0.54***
Adjusted R squared	0.68	0.21	0.31	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.29	0.27	0.92

*** p < 0.01

** p < 0.05

* p < 0.10

H: Hypothesis

Appendix 45: Description of the Sample (Study 3)

Industry			Type of organization			Size of the organization			Department			Experience in current organization			Level in current organization		
Accounting	2	4.4%	Private	21	47%	Large (500 or more employees)	33	73%	Administration	6	13.3%	Less than a month	0	0.0%	Entry level	15	33%
Auditing	1	2.2%	Public	24	53%	Medium (100 to 499 employees)	6	13%	Auditing	2	4.4%	1-6 months	7	15.6%	Middle management	20	44%
Banking	2	4.4%	Total	45	100%	Small (up to 99 employees)	6	13%	Business Development	1	2.2%	1-3 years	16	35.6%	Top management	10	22%
BPO	1	2.2%				Total	45	100%	Call Center	1	2.2%	Over 3 Years	22	48.9%	Total	45	100%
Call Center	1	2.2%							Capital Management	1	2.2%	Total	45	100.0%			
Digital Media	2	4.4%							Co-op Coordinator	1	2.2%						
Education	13	28.9%							Customer Service Delivery	2	4.4%						
Financial Services	3	6.7%							Finance and Accounts	3	6.7%						
FMCG	1	2.2%							General Management	1	2.2%						
Health Care	3	6.7%							Infection Prevention and Control	1	2.2%						
HR	1	2.2%							Information and Technology	5	11.1%						
IT	1	2.2%							Operations	13	28.9%						
Paints	1	2.2%							Research	2	4.4%						
Printing and Packaging	1	2.2%							Retail Banking	1	2.2%						
Research and Development	8	17.8%							Sales	2	4.4%						
Retail	2	4.4%							Sociology	1	2.2%						
Telecom	1	2.2%							Strategy	1	2.2%						
Trading	1	2.2%							Teaching Center	1	2.2%						
Total	45	100.0%							Total	45	100.0%						

Work salience			Gender			Formal education			Bicultural			Age-group			Country where lived for the longest period			Interview duration	
Calling	20	44%	Female	22	48.9%	None	0	0%	Yes	40	89%	18-24	10	22.2%	Bangladesh	1	2.2%	Total (hours)	31
Career	20	44%	Male	23	51.1%	High school	2	4%	No	5	11%	25-34	13	28.9%	Belgium	1	2.2%	Longest (minutes)	71
Job	5	11%	Total	45	100.0%	Trade/technical/vocational degree	0	0%	Total	45	100%	35-44	9	20.0%	Brazil	3	6.7%	Shortest (minutes)	18
Total	45	100%				Bachelor's degree	17	38%				45-54	11	24.4%	Canada	19	42.2%	Average (minutes)	41
						Professional designation	3	7%				55-64	2	4.4%	China	1	2.2%		
						Master's degree	14	31%				Total	45	100.0%	France	2	4.4%		
						Doctorate degree	9	20%							Germany	1	2.2%		
						Total	45	100%							Ghana	1	2.2%		
															India	9	20.0%		
															Italy	1	2.2%		
															Japan	1	2.2%		
															Nigeria	1	2.2%		
															Pakistan	1	2.2%		
															South Korea	1	2.2%		
															Switzerland	1	2.2%		
															USA	1	2.2%		
															Total	45	100.0%		

Appendix 46: Summary Report for Interested Research Participants

Thank you once again for participating in my research project.

You had expressed interest to learn more about the results of the research. Here is a summary of the findings, which provides a clear indication of when an employee is likely to rate an organization as a *great place to work*:

Employees who find **meaning in work** (feel that they are making a contribution/doing something important/aiding a greater cause/serving a deeper purpose/making a difference/making an impact), **meaning at work** (they like being part of the organization, feel connected to the people in the organization, feel a sense of belonging to the organization, and feel that they can be themselves in the organization), and a good fit with their organization or **person-organization fit** (their expectations match the support offered by the organization, the way things are done in the organization, the reputation of the organization, the organizational culture, the purpose of the organization, and the rewards from the organization) are the ones who are more likely to rate their organizations as a **Great Place to Work**. **Meaning at work** is the most significant predictor followed by **person-organization fit** and **meaning in work**. **Person-work fit** (a match between the employees' interests, knowledge, skills, abilities, and personality and their work) is important for **meaning in work** while **person-organization fit** is important for **meaning at work**.

Please do not hesitate to connect with me if you would like further details.