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SCALING CLIFFS AND CROSSING CHASMS:
UNPACKING THE MICRO-PROCESSES OF INCLUSION THROUGH THE LENS OF
AUTISM JOB COACHES

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ABSTRACT

In this two essay dissertation, I explore the challenges faced by organizations trying to create inclusive workplaces by addressing two sets of questions involved in the important process of ‘building bridges’ between different groups: 1) the process of – and challenges associated with- bringing together members of marginalized and dominant groups in the workplace; 2) how organizations select and socialize individuals to engage in the process of bringing these two groups together. I answer these questions by focusing on one set of actors charged with developing an inclusive employment landscape- job coaches for adults with autism spectrum disorders.
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me hope during the scariest moments; and it motivates me to learn more, do better, and
contribute to a more equitable society each day. I dedicate this dissertation to him.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Organizations increasingly require people to work effectively with others from different backgrounds. Today it is widely accepted that diversity plays an integral role in organizational success and there has been a steady drumbeat of calls to implement policies and practices designed to increase employee and talent pool diversity. Still organizations often continue to struggle to create an inclusive environment- one that facilitates relationships that spur efficiency, creativity, and optimal performance outcomes among people from different backgrounds (Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003; Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Yet building strong relational foundations is a crucial cornerstone for organizations hoping to reap the benefits associated with diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989). In this dissertation, I focus on answering two key questions weighing on many of today’s organizations: 1) what is the process of – and challenges associated with- bringing together members of marginalized and dominant groups in the workplace; and 2) how do organizations with the mission to build inclusive environments recruit and socialize individuals to take on said mission?

Understanding how organizational actors create, respond to, and manage for relationships between people from different groups as they aim for inclusivity is central to my dissertation. A substantial body of diversity research sheds light on the importance of relationships between various types of demographic out-groups (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992; Graen & Scandura, 1987). There has also been a significant body of social network research that has focused on network mechanisms such as same-sex homophily, and the availability of informal networks that inhibit the formation of inclusive organizations (Ibarra, 1992; 1993;
1995). Less is known, however, about the micro-processes, the everyday behaviors and practices taken on by organizational actors that contribute to more functional intergroup relations in organizations and within broader network structures. I contend that these seemingly mundane behaviors taking place on the ‘ground floor’ are at the very core of inclusivity with powerful short- and long-term consequences for organizations. In order to gain insight into these micro-processes, I pull from the rich research traditions of stigma (i.e. devalued attributes; Goffman, 1963) and the micro-foundations of change to develop a framework for understanding how individuals build inclusive working relationships between marginalized and dominant groups in organizations.

My data collection and analysis consists of 72 semi-structured interviews (plus, the use of secondary resources such as manuals, websites, and participant observation) within a landscape of employment that is going through several changes and efforts to integrate individuals with one particular stigmatized identity into the mainstream workforce – autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Owing to their disability, individual with ASD face an extremely challenging employment landscape (I outline this in more detail in Chapter 3’s Findings section), and this context provides an extreme case of actors trying to create inclusion in organizations.

**Overview of Essay #1**

I aim to answer the first question in Essay #1 which is an inductive study titled “Bridging the Gap: Facilitating De-stigmatization through Go-Betweens”. Building inclusive work environments relies on relational connections, connections that are built by reaching across and working amongst lines of difference. Existing research highlights much of the experience of individuals with stigmatized identities and how they react to – or even try to change (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010) - workplace cultures that do not facilitate such connections. However,
less is understood about how their non-stigmatized peers, or ‘markers’, can also facilitate the emergence of relational connections that inclusion calls for.

My first essay uses an inductive methodology (grounded theory) in order to build theory about how the non-stigmatized can bring together the stigmatized and non-stigmatized actors within workplaces. My data collection and analysis consists of 72 semi-structured interviews (plus, the use of secondary resources such as manuals, websites, participant observation) focused on job coaches, an emerging profession gaining increasing attention (and pressure) to facilitate inclusion for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and related disabilities. Autism spectrum disorders (ASD), a disability with increasing diagnoses and associated with several social challenges, was until recently not fully understood among working adults. However, there has been increasing worldwide attention to the high unemployment rates among hundreds of thousands of capable adults with autism. Moreover, job coaches have gained immense policy attention as critical conduits for the success of adults with autism because they play an integral role in educating both the job seeker and employer about getting past initial social interaction barriers to develop effective relationships. These job coaches are responsible for facilitating effective relationships between two sets of actors: (1) job seekers/employees with autism and (2) neurotypical (or, non-autistic) managers. The nature of their job, namely its focus on bringing people from these two groups together, provides a useful context for magnifying the experience of non-stigmatized actors in ways that many organizational roles do not.

Although a unique profession (job coaching) and target population (individuals with autism spectrum disorders), the job coach role offers an ‘extreme case’ (Eisenhardt, 1989) that might bring to the surface transferrable processes by which organizations can facilitate inclusion between the stigmatized and non-stigmatized. In organizations that desire to attract and retain
individuals from marginalized groups, individuals that know how to do what job coaches do represent an invaluable asset. Not only can they help create and monitor effective mentoring programs, but they can also help resolve stigma-related conflict and facilitate more effective team processes. Stigma aside, organizations are increasingly relying on team processes that drive efficiency and effectiveness (Joshi, 2014; Joshi & Knight, 2015); while this can be beneficial for organizations it also provides fertile ground for conflict among team and group members. The job coaches’ role then also relates to those individuals who seek to resolve the conflict among their team mates and to repair the relationship so that the benefits of the group can outweigh the cons.

My first essay responds to emergent themes from data collection by drawing upon the rich literature of boundaries about how the marker, or non-stigmatized actor, engages in work that can facilitate such inclusion in organizations. Existing research has used boundary theory to offer fascinating insights about managing boundaries between work and home (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006; 2009). Boundary work in organizations has also been used to understand "boundary spanners" or those individuals that work in multiple projects or departments (Friedman & Podolny, 1992). Less is understood, however, about the boundary work of those that work across stigmatized and non-stigmatized groups in organizations. Understanding the job coaches’ experiences and strategies should not only help understand how individuals bridge members of different demographic groups, but also how their work facilitates the organizations’ efficiency and effectiveness.

**Overview of Essay #2**

While the first essay focuses on how the individual or the non-stigmatized actor, goes about their job of effectuating relationships between the stigmatized and non-stigmatized, the
second essay (titled “Bridging through Belief: Selection and Socialization in Ideologically Infused Organizations”) focuses on a key challenge for organizations: how to select and socialize individuals to fulfill these roles in organizations. Since creating inclusive environments involves a re-working of stigmatized and non-stigmatized boundaries, one could argue that de-stigmatization (i.e. “processes whereby the categories eliciting the reactions of stigma evolve and change over time”; Jones et al., 1984: p. 302) requires shifts in beliefs for organizations and individuals that take on the role. In my second essay, I aim to understand how organizations that are trying to build inclusive workplaces select and socialize others to ‘buy into’ or join in their goals for inclusivity. I also try to understand how individuals in the role make sense of these organizational tactics.

Extant research offers insight into de-stigmatization processes at the level of organizations (Helms & Patterson, 2012) and professions (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2007). It has been noted that the most important approach to changing stigma “must ultimately address the fundamental cause of stigma….the deeply held attitudes and beliefs of powerful groups that lead to labeling, stereotyping, setting apart, devaluing, and discrimination” (Link & Phelan, 2001: 381). It should also include critical changes in the way marked people have accepted such attitudes and beliefs.

De-stigmatization in such a way that changes mindsets and cascades through different layers of society can also be seen through the lens of social movements. This is especially the case with de-stigmatization efforts concerning employment for a certain group of people. As an example, consider the civil rights movement in the 1960s, the women’s suffrage movement in the, and the current LGBT movement when the broader ideals of equality were adopted by the government and employment organizations to make more accepting and friendly organizations
for African Americans, women, and LGBT in organizations. While such movements revolve around different identity groups, they share in common the goal of influencing others’ perceptions about a group’s value and worthiness to be fairly employed. Organizations that take on these goals for embracing diversity and inclusion inherently adopt a mission for change. Organizational members’ roles in creating that change run parallel to the processes discussed in rich traditions of social movements and institutions, specifically the micro-processes of change like micro-mobilization and institutional work (Creed et al., 2010; Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011; Nillson, 2015). This line of research highlights the important role that agents of change play in carrying the movement (Purdy & Gray, 2005; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005).

My second essay uses an inductive methodology (grounded theory) to investigate the question at hand. Data collection consists of semi-structured interviews with leaders of job coaches (18) and job coaches (24) themselves as well as job coach training manuals. This essay, based on emerging themes in the data, builds off of the literature on micro-processes of change and specifically draws on the literature on organizations with strong ideologies to address the lacuna. While this literature on ideologically infused organizations focuses on “a set of beliefs about how the social world operates, including ideas about what outcomes are desirable and how they can be achieved” (Ingram & Simons, 2000; p. 25), less is known about how leaders of organizations use cognitive and discursive strategies to influence change agents to join, stay, and be ‘high performers’ of de-stigmatization efforts so that they will achieve and spread the mission as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The job coaching organizations provide a useful context for investigating this question in Essay #2 around selection and socialization of change agents for efforts aimed at de-stigmatization. Organizations hiring job coaches often take on missions to do more than place
and secure jobs for individuals, but they also assert a desire for societal change and advocacy for
the issue at hand. They, thus, represent a more extreme example of organizations around the
globe that are aiming to achieve inclusivity goals for a range of demographic groups. At the
same time, like many ideologically infused organizations (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003;
Simons & Ingram, 1997), job coaching organizations do not have the resources to provide
attractive compensation for their employees. They thus have a difficult time attracting and
retaining people that will do the job well, and they hold in high esteem those individuals that do.
Beyond the context of de-stigmatization, organizations that are ideologically infused exist now
more than ever, in large part because they know that ideology is linked to action (Ingram &
Simons, 2000). Thus, embracing an ideology means that an individual will act in ways desired by
the organization – for better, or for worse. From non-profit organizations that exist to spread
awareness about environmental issues, marginalization and discrimination, different religions,
and political interests to for-profit organizations that rely on their members’ embodiment of their
strong mission (e.g. Monsanto), selecting and socializing individuals to respond to and embrace
their ideology is a prevailing concern for organizations.

**Formal Research Questions**

Taken together, I use stigma and micro-foundations of change to address a broader
question about creating inclusive workplaces across two separate essays. The formal research
questions across these two essays are:

1. How do the non-stigmatized build and facilitate relationships between the stigmatized
   and the non-stigmatized?

2. How do leaders select and socialize change agents for a mission with a strong
   ideology, particularly one focused on de-stigmatization?

**Contributions**
While existing research frequently discusses stigma as an evaluation that is taken for
granted, sociological perspectives encourage the investigation of stigma as the result of powerful
actors and several structural processes taking place (Link & Phelan, 2001; Warren, 1980).
Important for my dissertation, stigma’s existence does not just occur outside of organizations and
workplaces. Indeed, stigma permeates through boundaries of broader society and it impacts
employees’ experiences within organizations. To be sure, research on diversity at multiple levels
of analysis demonstrates that if an employee experiences a devaluation of identity outside of the
organization, managers within the organization should care given the negative effects such
devaluation can have on the employee performance, productivity, and relationships with others
(King, Dawson, West, Gilrane, Peddie, & Bastin, 2011; Yang & Konrad, 2011). Findings across
these two essays will offer fresh and promising insights into enduring research questions in the
domains of diversity and inclusion and stigma by shedding light on the relational and
organizational micro-processes that facilitate changes in responses to stigmatized or
marginalized groups in organizations. In addition, findings contribute by shedding light on
organizational actors’ role in making broader organizational, and potentially societal, changes.

In Essay #1, I contribute by emphasizing the importance of the “powerful” discussed by
Link & Phelan (2001), the “wise” discussed by Goffman (1963), and the “go-betweens”
discussed by Jones et al (1984). And I do this by integrating the literature on stigma with the
literature on boundaries. In doing so, I highlight the importance of the work of non-stigmatized
actors in facilitating a process of making an employment structure more equitable. By harnessing

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1 While individuals with disabilities encounter challenges with obtaining and keeping a job because of the
stigma associated with their disability, not all challenges are associated with said stigma. Unlike members of
other stigmatized groups associated with race, gender, and sexual orientation, attributes of the group (in this
case, having a disability) can indeed pose constraints on a person’s ability to fulfill job requirements. When I
refer to stigmatization in this dissertation, I am however referring to individuals with autism whose disability
does not limit their ability to do the job that they are seeking.
the literature on boundaries to specifically examine individuals managing boundaries between different stigmatized and non-stigmatized worlds, findings shed light on the process of ‘localized de-stigmatization’ (i.e. the creation and sustenance of relationships between the stigmatized and non-stigmatized by the crafting of value related to perceived differences), as it is facilitated by actors that see themselves as go-betweens. The process that unfolds in my model highlights the notion of value crafting, or adding value where it was not recognized, through interactions with the stigmatized and non-stigmatized. Findings also shed light on the inter-personal boundary work tactics that allow for value to be crafted and gained in areas that it was not recognized for individuals with stigmatized identities.

In Essay #2, I contribute by highlighting how organizations select and socialize for the kinds of actors that I introduce in Essay #1. Specifically, I shed light on the cognitive mechanism of belief and the role it plays for selecting and socializing individuals to take on the mission of an ideologically-infused organization, particularly one focusing on de-stigmatization efforts. Furthermore, my model demonstrates how organization can craft the very belief system that they select for. Second, I contribute by unpacking the paradox associated with the work of de-stigmatization and how organizations attempt to manage newcomers’ understanding of such paradox. And I highlight the paradoxes that could be specific for de-stigmatization efforts (dependence/independence paradox) versus those that are more generally experienced across a variety of ideologically-infused organizations (contradictions between the past and the future). Third, findings from Essay #2 contribute by highlighting how individuals (and not just organizations) are critical conduits of transmitting ideologies to actors outside of the organization and across different layers of society.
Moving forward, I review the literature on stigma and micro-foundations of change in the next chapter (Chapter 2). Then, I use the next two chapters to elaborate on Essay #1 (Chapter 3) and Essay #2 (Chapter 4) respectively. In each chapter, I outline the theoretical background informing my questions, methods, context, findings, and contribution. I conclude in Chapter 5 with final comments.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

My dissertation, overall, aims to answer questions about building inclusive organizations. I draw upon two sets of literature to understand how individuals strive— and are influenced – to do just this: stigma and the micro-foundations of change.

Stigma

**Conceptualizing Stigma.** Stigma has been defined as an “attribute that is deeply discrediting” in a particular context (Goffman, 1963; p. 3) and it refers to the end result of the subconscious human tendency to place other people, professions, and organizations into categories that are marked by disgrace, taint, or devaluation (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Goffman, 1963). Getting to this end result, where an attribute is deemed devalued, relies on a process whereby a person carrying a mark (i.e. a “perceived or inferred condition of deviation from a prototype or norm that might initiate the stigmatizing process”; Jones et al., 1984; p. 8), is deemed as less than a full person (Goffman, 1963). How this process occurs has been studied from different theoretical perspectives.

The conceptualization of stigma slightly differs depending on the theoretical perspective used to approach it. For instance, the social psychological perspective of stigma concerns itself with not only the cognitive and psychological processes involved in stigmatization, but also how individuals’ reactions to stigma reflect the make-up of their social surroundings (Hebl & Dovidio, 2005; Jones et al., 1984). That is, a person responds to a stigma based on social norms that they’ve been exposed to. At the same time, the sociological perspective of stigma emphasize the social and structural conditions that give way to stigma marking by others (Jones et al., 1984; Link & Phelan, 2001). It also emphasizes two important issues for understanding stigma: peril
and variations in audience sensitivity to/tolerance for stigma (p. 81). As such, proponents of the sociological perspective of stigma emphasize the role of power in stigmatization processes and conceptualizes stigma as a “co-occurrence of its components-labeling stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination” (Link & Phelan, 2001; p. 363).

Across the two perspectives of stigma, there is agreement about the five dimensions of stigma: origin, course, perilousness, concealability, and disruptiveness. (Crocker et al, 1998; Jones et al., 1984; Goffman, 1983). The origin of a stigmatized attribute or mark concerns how it came to be; for instance, did an individual contract it through another individual (e.g. HIV) or were they born with it (e.g. down syndrome). The course of a stigmatized attribute concerns itself with what kind of life trajectory is associated with it; for instance will it lead to death (e.g. cancer)? Perilousness refers to the degree to which the stigma is deemed dangerous by others; for example, individuals diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder may be perceived as dangerous or racial and ethnic minority groups vary in terms of how dangerous they are perceived by the dominant group. Concealability concerns how much the attribute is discernible to the naked eye; for example, is it a visible stigma (e.g. physical disability involving a wheelchair) or an invisible stigma (e.g. mental illnesses). Disruptiveness concerns how much the attribute hinders the flow of social interaction (e.g. epilepsy). These five dimensions are important to understand because they impact how- and the extent to which- a mark is (or can potentially become) devalued. Importantly, all of these dimensions are rooted in perceptions of interaction partners, further demonstrating how stigma is socially constructed (Jones et al., 1984; Goffman, 1983): That is, de-valuation around a certain attribute or mark does not just exist, but instead, is created though social processes (Hebl & Dovidio, 2005; Goffman, 1963; Jones et al.,
Next, I provide an overview of this process of stigmatization, as explained in extant literature.

**The Process of Stigmatization.** The social psychological and sociological perspectives of stigma converge in their emphasis on stigma’s reliance on a deviation from others’ normative expectations instead of an attribute whose devaluation is taken for granted as something that just is (Jones et al., 1984). By organizing others in this way, human beings reinforce their own normative expectations and project them onto the other person. In the context of invisible stigmas, or those that is not readily discernible, a ‘marked’ person inherits a stigmatized label at the point that others become aware that they possess an attribute outside of normative expectations. Otherwise stated, the marked person becomes “reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (Goffman, 1963; p. 3). But how does this reduction occur?

Given that stigma research predominantly takes on an individualistic approach to understand the process, Link & Phelan (2001) agree with Susan Fiske (1998) that social psychological perspectives of stigma miss out by not focusing on structural issues involved in stigma. In order to overcome such challenges, they suggest that, as Goffman (1963) urges, researchers can describe stigma by referencing relationships between concepts such as “attribute” and “stereotype”. Referencing these relationships furthermore allows for better understanding of the process of stigma, or stigmatization, and provides insight into how the undoing of stigmatization might occur. In doing so, they (Link & Phelan, 2001) move forward to conceptualize the process of stigmatization to consist of five converging components:

“(1) people distinguish and label differences; (2) dominant cultural beliefs link labeled persons to undesirable characteristics; (3) labeled persons are placed in distinct categories so as to accomplish some degree of separation of “us” from “them”; (4) labeled persons experience status loss and discrimination; and (5) access to social, economic, and political power allows the
identification of differentness, the construction of stereotypes, the separation of labeled persons into distinct categories, and the full execution of disapproval, rejection, exclusion, and discrimination” (p. 367).

This process of reduction has important implications for consequences primarily because of the threat felt by those that do not have the stigmatizing mark (Jones et al., 1984). Often times the non-stigmatized actor’s feeling of threat is symbolic and stems from a need to maintain socially constructed social orders that afford a sense of stability in an otherwise messy world. In fact, Hebb (1955) states that “…the closure achieved by the special symbolic universe of society encapsulates its members. It wraps them within a kind of protective cocoon of orderliness and meaning that then shields them from unencumbered exposure to natural order.” (c.f. Jones et al, 1984; p. 83). Such social orders are powerful not only because they drive behavior but also because they are usually not visible; that is, they are embedded in cultural norms and laws in such a way that they are the taken for granted rules governing everyday behavior (Jones et al., 1984). Thus although invisible, the social orders of a society facilitate and support the non-stigmatized actor’s sense of threat towards those in the stigmatized group, and drive behaviors that allow for exclusion, rejection, and disapproval.

The socially constructed nature of stigma also opens the door to unpacking different actors and how they contribute to the process of de-valuation. In fact, Jones et al (1984) note that “it is generally understood that the stigmatizing process is relational” (p. 5). How have these actors been considered in the existing literature? Some scholars refer to the person with the stigmatized label or identity as the marked person. At the same time, the person that does not have the same stigmatized label or identity as the marked has been referred to in several ways. For one, Jones et al (1984) refer to this relatively non-stigmatized actor as the normal (Goffman, 1963; Jones et al, 1964), the wise (Link, 1987) and the marker (Jones et al., 1984). The terms
mark and marker are helpful because they run parallel to the idea that being marked does not equate to being stigmatized; instead, a person becomes stigmatized when “the mark has been linked to an attributional processes that discredit the bearer, i.e. that ‘spoil’ his identity” (Crocker et al., 1998; Jones et al., 1984; p. 8). That is, a marked person is not necessarily stigmatized and a marker is not necessarily stigmatizing; but, they are in positions to be stigmatized and/or to be stigmatizing, respectively.

On top of that, Jones et al (1984) call actors that interact with both worlds “go-betweens”. Within this role of the go-between, the marker has the “delicate task of conveying that he doesn’t view the marked person’s social identity as ‘spoiled’ (p. 195). Individuals in this position are identified as important because they are "...persons who are normals but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it" (Goffman, 1963; p. 29). They are also noted to have unique experiences because: 1) they become marginal in the sense that they are of few normals accepting the marked person; 2) they may have to pass through some kind of heart-changing experience before they can take on the standpoint of those with that particular stigma; 3) they can experience a courtesy stigma and provide a model to the non-stigmatized world of 'normalization', or showing how far normals can go in treating the stigmatized person as if they didn't have the stigma; and 4) they have the potential to make both the stigmatized and the normal uncomfortable because they're always ready to take on a burden that's not really theirs (Goffman, 1963).

Regardless of their title, these individuals –markers- are important because they are examples of people that are indeed able to break through challenges associated with marked.

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2 Given these terms' reflection of the relational process of stigmatization, I will refer use the terms “stigmatized” and “marked” interchangeably and I will use the terms “non-stigmatized” and “marker” interchangeably in this dissertation.
relationships (relationships between the marked and the marker; Jones et al., 1984) such as intergroup anxiety and conflict (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Jowai-Bell, 2001; Hyers & Swim, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 1985; 1989). Although their presence is not as common, go-betweens have the capability to simultaneously "take command" of both stigmatized and normal positions, demonstrating as Goffman (1963) stated, that “the roles of the stigmatized and normal are not only complementary; they also exhibit some striking parallels and similarities" (Goffman, 1963; p 133) and "the normal and the stigmatized are not persons but rather perspectives” (Goffman, 1963; p. 138). In this dissertation, I surmise that go-betweens should thus not only be able to demonstrate that the differences between the marked and the marker and complementary with important similarities, but also they should be able to teach them to see each other in such a way and facilitate the de-stigmatization process. Thus I next review literature on the undoing, dismantling of stigma, or de-stigmatization.

**De-stigmatization.** While the mentioned experiences facilitate the devaluation process that is integral to stigmatization, existing research calls for more understanding of de-stigmatization processes (i.e. “processes whereby the categories eliciting the reactions of stigma evolve and change over time”; Jones et al., 1984, p. 302). Warren (1980) provides a systemic theory of de-stigmatization, pointing to the need to address pieces of a structure (or modes) that can promote de-stigmatization, aims of stigmatization, and degrees of success of de-stigmatization. Several modes of de-stigmatization, or structural arrangements, have been discussed in existing literature by Lofland (1969), Sagarin (1975), and Trice & Roman (1975)—namely professional treatment, self-help, and political activism (Warren, 1980). Warren (1980) also suggests that individual purification (“the death or cleansing of the old moral self and the substitution of a new moral self”, p. 62), transcendence (“not the erasure of the previous self but
the expression of an alternative better self”, p. 64), collective aristocratization (a collective claiming by the stigmatized group that they are super-normal, that is better than normal), and the role of the charismatic deviant (i.e. the chosen few within the stigmatized group that serve as representatives of the deviant collective) can be important modes of de-stigmatization.

In terms of the aims of de-stigmatization, scholars have highlighted two: (a) toward reforming the person (Warren, 1980) or (b) toward behavior of a particular group or by trying to change beliefs and attitudes (e.g. reduction of a mark’s attributional salience, positive changes in valence, a reduction in its significance for interpersonal relations; Jones et al., 1984) (Warren, 1980). Lastly, the degree to which de-stigmatization is seen as a success has been conceptualized in three ways: normalcy (Lofland, 1969), deviance (Lofland, 1969), and charisma (Katz, 1972; Warren, 1980). These three conceptualizations are differentiated by Warren (1980) as follows: “charisma is the obverse of deviance; normals are those who fulfill expectations, deviants and those stigmatized are those who fail, and charismatics are those whose actions surpass the normative” (p. 60).

At the same time, Link & Phelan (2001) stress the need for a multi-faceted, multi-level approach to changing stigma because of the “mutually reinforcing mechanisms linking attitudes and beliefs of dominant groups to an array of untoward outcomes for stigmatized persons” (p. 381). Thus, approaches to changing stigma must take on the mechanisms that lead to the disadvantaged outcomes as well as the sources of individual and structural discrimination. At the same time, the approach must reach the core of stigma-the beliefs and attitudes of the dominant group (Link & Phelan, 2001). In addition, given the salience of power in stigmatization processes (Link & Phelan, 2001), members of the dominant group (i.e. the group with more relative power, those that do not carry the potentially stigmatized mark) should serve as
important actors in advocating alongside members of the stigmatized group in order to change negative beliefs and attitudes of those in the non-stigmatized group. Since I concern myself with stigma and the role of go-betweens that are in the organizational context, I next review existing literature on stigma’s antecedents and consequences.

(De)Stigmatization in Organizations: Antecedents and Consequences. The experiences associated with- and process of - stigma have been given attention in existing management research through investigation of the management of stigma and stigma’s impact. First, extant management literature unpacks what it’s like for the stigmatized actor to manage their stigmatized identity in the workplace. Here, processes like identity work, or the range of activities done to create, sustain, and adapt different aspects of the self (Snow & Anderson, 1987; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003), has been used to shed light on how individuals belonging to stigmatized professions (i.e. those in ‘dirty work’ positions) manager the ‘spoiled’ aspect of their identities (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2007; Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). At the same time, existing literature on managing a stigmatized identity sheds light on the important decision making process of disclosure that many individuals with invisible stigmatized identities are pressured to consider on a consistent basis (Clair et al., 2005; Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Ragins, 2008). For those that do not disclose, the literature uses the secrecy cycle framework to shed light on the psychological strain from not being able to bring one’s full self into the work place (Smart & Wegner, 1999). For example, Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell (2007) find that the fear of disclosure, itself, can have detrimental effects on employees’ job attitude and career outcomes. For those that do disclose, this literature puts forth different identity management strategies that range from revealing or concealing (Clair et al., 2005) and that occur across different work and life domains (Ragins, 2008). At the same time, existing research has begun to investigate how
individuals with visible stigmas, particularly visible disabilities, claim and acknowledge their visible marks. For example, Lyons and colleagues (in press) highlight findings that suggest that individuals with physical disabilities that claimed (instead of downplayed) their physical disability in the workplace were evaluated with perceptions of competence and warmth.

In addition to the choice to disclose or claim a stigmatized identity, existing management literature sheds light on the impact of carrying a stigmatized identity into organizations. It gives insight into experiences such as discrimination and harassment in organizations that occur due to a person’s stigma, and furthermore highlights co-worker and organizational characteristics that help mitigate these negative effects. For instance, the same study by Ragins and colleagues (2007) that highlighted the fear of disclosure found that people’s fear decreased in workgroups perceived to be more supportive. Similarly, in a study of 220 gay men and 159 lesbians, Griffith & Hebl (2002) found that, for one, self-acceptance facilitated disclosure. They also found that people disclosing in work environments that had gay friendly policies experienced higher job satisfaction and less anxiety.

Existing management and organization literature also offers some insight into what de-stigmatization processes look like for organizations (Helms & Patterson, 2012) and members of professions (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2007). These studies demonstrate the use of cognitive and behavioral strategies to change public devaluation. For example, Mixed Martial Art (MMA) organizations co-opted negative labels (Helms & Patterson, 2012). Other studies highlight cognitive and behavioral strategies to change the marked group’s belief of devaluation. For example, managers associated with ‘dirty work’ occupations use of normalizing the negatively evaluated work (Ashforth et al., 2007). A rich history of organizational diversity management has indirect implications for de-stigmatization as well. This literature suggests that
factors like a diversity climate can impact identification and employee performance (McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2008; 2009) (both very important outcomes of stigma) because effective diversity management makes employees feel that the “firm serves their best interests” (McKay et al., 2008, p. 353).

To my knowledge, few studies consider the role of the marker in facilitating inclusive organizations through de-stigmatization. Some studies have looked at stigma reduction but they are in health journals and focus on people’s self-stigma reduction, and one study looks at how medical residents can view obese patients differently (Heijnders & Meij, 2006; Wiese et al., 1992). However by intentionally addressing the marker’s role, I begin to acknowledge the relational perspective of stigma and the social constructing (and de-constructing) that seminal work on stigma stresses. As a next step, in order to understand how the non-stigmatized can facilitate inclusion, I turn to literature that focuses on how, in general, individuals facilitate change in organizations as well as the psychological, cognitive, and behavioral processes involved in doing so.

**Micro-foundations of Structural Change: How Individuals Incite Change in Organizations**

One useful point of departure for unpacking de-stigmatization within and across organizations is that of social change. Social movement and institutional theory are two helpful literatures that provide anchoring for my understanding of how people and organizations exert agency in their environments. Across these literatures, which I outline below, I find that organizations are not the only critical “carrier” of change in their environment. In fact, the individuals, or other actors, within and across organizations are responsible for engaging the cognitive and relational processes that influence change. Social change agents, or individuals that “act as a catalyst in convincing their firms to support a social issue” (Sonenshein, 2016; p. 350)
thus play an important role in constructing and crafting meaning (Sonenshein, 2006) in organizations. Such agents of change have been conceptualized in new institutional theory as institutional entrepreneurs. In the literature on social movements, they are referred to as the organizational intellectual or activists. I highlight both of these streams of literature, noting how they converge in highlighting key individual actors and their key behaviors for creating change. Moreover, I find this literature useful because it aides further understanding of how organizations can enact the particular change of creating inclusion and facilitating de-stigmatization within organizations.

**Institutional Theory.** First, the literature on institutions defines institutional change as “a difference in form, quality, or state over time” (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006: p. 866). Emerging institutional fields are conceptualized as those in which a dominant logic has not yet quite emerged and are characterized by “tumultuous and conflictual” processes (Purdy & Gray, 2005: p. 357). Given that the rules, norms, and practices of the field are not yet embedded to the point that they can be taken for granted, ambiguity and uncertainty are two salient stimuli of institutional entrepreneurship, or attempts to alter or replace an institutional logic (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005: p. 38). Institutional entrepreneurs, then, are the actors that “theorize new fields and launch new organizations” (p. 356) by borrowing, creating, or importing logics (i.e. a set of rules and standards for actors within the same field (Goodrick & Salancik, 1996). Not only do institutional entrepreneurs need to suggest and introduce these logics but, due to the social construction of institutions, their logics need to be accepted by others within the emerging field (Purdy & Gray, 2005). As institutions are built upon older institutions (Holm, 1995), institutional entrepreneurs must build upon existing institutional logics in (Thornton & Ocasio 2008) order to advocate for the value of the new logic and to legitimize the field.
A key behavior for institutional entrepreneurs is translation and this is due to another key behavior-negotiation. Negotiation of institutional logics, often a prevailing process in emerging fields (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Hoffman, 1999), is conceptualized as a process of “institutional war” in which “politics, agency relations, and vested interests of actors guide the formation of institutions” (Hoffman 1999: p. 367). Given that one must have processed an older logic in order to propose a new logic, institutional entrepreneurs must translate existing logics in order to negotiate new logics (Purdy & Gray, 2009; Greenwood et al., 2008). Because translation refers to the interpretation and re-formulation of ideas and practices, it is a behavior that demonstrates how organizations can be agentic through their leaders and emphasizes the ability for organizations to deliberately or otherwise transform ideas (Greenwood et al., 2008).

While translation and negotiation are interdependent processes that are similar in several ways (e.g. they both reflect agentic characteristics of organizations and they both refer to formulation of ideas and/or logics), fundamental differences exist between the two behaviors. While negotiation processes speak to political interests that drive particular persuasive behavioral techniques (e.g. mobilizing support, proving value, etc., Purdy & Gray, 2005) in order to form an institutional logic, translation processes speak to the cognitive underpinnings of such linguistic and verbal behaviors. For example, evidence of institutional vocabularies is present in studies such as Ansari, Wijen, & Gray (2014) who discuss framing and frame shifts. Suddaby & Greenwood (2005) also demonstrate how the language and rhetoric used by new organizational forms served an important role in the negotiation of logics. In doing so, they demonstrate that language can be used to negotiate shifts in logic (p. 35).

Much attention has also been paid to institutional work which is described as “the efforts of individuals and collective actors to cope with, keep up with, shore up, tear down, tinker with,
transform or create anew the institutional structures within which they live, work, and play, and which give them their roles, relationships, resources, and routines” (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011, p. 53; c.f. Nillson, 2015). For example, in a study of the hard-to-house in Canada across two cases (a day-care facility for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and a municipal program organizing accommodation for homeless people) Lawrence and Dover (2015) found that places played a key role in facilitating (and sometimes complicating) institutional work. Also, Zietsma & Lawrence (2010) find that practice work and boundary work are two types of work that need to take place in order for fields to change. At the same time, an offshoot of institutional work that is worth mentioning is that of positive institutional work. Defined as “the creation or maintenance of institutional patterns that express mutually constitutive experiential and social goods” (Nillson, 2015), this body of work is rooted in the domain of positive organizational scholarship and it seeks to infuse inquiry as agency, and inclusion into existing theories of institutional theory. Overall, then, institutional theory offers insights into how changes aimed at inclusivity and de-stigmatization can be conceptualized. It is particularly helpful because from it I can infer the important role of the actors such as institutional entrepreneurs as well as behaviors such as translation, negotiation, and engaging in institutional work that are needed in order to create more inclusive organizations.

Social Movements. Second, there are, historically speaking, three theoretical approaches within the social movement body of literature: resource mobilization, political process (McAdam & Scott, 2005), and more recently, micro-mobilization. While the first focuses on organizational structure and processes, the second focuses on how the external political opportunities and internal grassroots settings (e.g. Work and neighborhoods; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996) work together to facilitate collective action. The third approach, micro-mobilization, is what I
focus on here. This concerns the social psychological process that turns people into agents of change that challenge the status quo (Gamson, 1992). And micro-mobilization theory’s development over the last few decades emphasizes the localized and/or micro-events that serve as “critical incidents” for collective action and macro-level changes that are often observed (Bernstein, 1997; Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010; Creed & Scully, 2000; Taylor & Raeburn, 1995). As an example, Creed et al (2010) demonstrate how gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) ministers grappled with the conflict between their role in the church and their marginalized identities and, subsequently, started to consider themselves as agents of change within the church.

One kind of agent of change discussed in the social movement literature, is the "organizational intellectual”, or an individual who creates, distributes, and applies culture" (Zald & McCarthy, 2006: p.97). The term can be used to understand an array of key behaviors. It can be used to refer to understand individuals who use ideas for fashion or "play" as well as those who use ideas to "justify and criticize existing social arrangements" (Zald & McCarthy, 2006: p.97). This literature is concerned with the micro-processes (such as the organizational setting and the intellectual’s career orientation) that impact their potential to advocate and the strategies used to do so. If attached to a social movement organization, organizational intellectuals can take on a full time position directly linked to social movement. The down side of this kind of attachment, however, has also been noted: "radical dissent is unlikely among organizationally attached intellectuals" (Zald & McCarthy, 2006: p.111).

The second way to conceptualize agents of change in the social movement literature is through the lens of activism. Within the domain of organizational research, activists are considered to be organizational stakeholders that are “not content with merely hoping that firms
will address their needs, nor with simply threatening (explicitly or implicitly) to withdraw from their exchange relationships with firms” (Briscoe, Chin, & Hambrick, 2014: p. 1787), but instead they “exert themselves to alter the behaviors and policies of corporations” (Briscoe et al., 2014: p. 1787). The motives and tactics of activists are generally discussed by drawing upon social movement literature when referencing activism towards corporations and the opportunity structure that facilitates their success or failure (King & Pearce, 2010; Schneiberg & Lounsbury, 2008; Tilly, 1978). And studies on activists’ motives not only suggest that their broad values and beliefs impact their agenda (Soule, 2009), but that they use the values and beliefs of their target corporation’s leaders in order to impact how they target them (Briscoe et al., 2014). For example, Briscoe et al. (2014) find that CEO political ideology (conservatism versus liberalism) impacted the extent to which LGBT employee activist groups formed. While this suggests the importance of the target firm’s identity, the notion of a broader collective comprised of people who differentially identify with it (and the label of “activist”) may further help to explain the tactics used and the extent to which change occurs. Overall, the social movement literature also offers insights into how organizational inclusivity can be achieved through actors such as activists and processes related to micro-mobilization.

Taken together, the body of work that converges social movements and organizations demonstrates how organizations are critical “carriers” of social movements (Zald, 2006). But what are the mechanisms through which organizations and people carry social movements? In an effort to understand how the change toward inclusivity can occur, I address this in the next section by reviewing three common mechanisms.

**Mechanisms of Change.** Organizations play a central role in the process and outcomes of social movements and existing literature suggests three predominant mechanisms:
environmental, cognitive, and relational (Campbell, 2005). First, the environmental mechanism refers to the political opportunity structure or the “set of formal and informal political conditions that encourage, discourage, channel, and otherwise affect movement activity” (Campbell, 2005: p. 44). For example, the adoption of domestic partner benefits by more prominent firms afforded activists political leverage to use in influencing mainstream firms to follow suit in Briscoe & Safford (2008). Doing so, thus, facilitated progress of the overall movement.

The second type of mechanism for social movements and organizations-relational- also speaks to the importance of formal and informal networks, or social structures, that "shape and constrain people's behavior and opportunities for action" (p.60). Networks must often be cultivated in order for movement leaders to gain traction; thus network cultivation is a very important relational mechanism. Networks also serve as a sense making function insofar as they help movement leaders to assess what the issues are (Campbell, 2005: p.63), thus to potentially engage in framing.

Third, cognitive mechanisms refer to processes such as framing, diffusion, translation, and bricolage. Acknowledging and uncovering these cognitive processes is important because it allows for better understanding of the dynamics of change (Campbell, 2005). The concept of a ‘frame’ comes from Goffman (1974) who defines frames as “schemata of interpretation”; this schema allows individuals “to locate perceive, identify, and label” (Goffman, 1974: p. 21) their life experiences. Frames are therefore helpful because they help to simplify and break down the wealth of information that exists “out there”. Collective action frames are thus conceptualized as a set of beliefs and meanings that are communicated through metaphors, symbols, and cognitive cues (Campbell, 2005) that “inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization (SMO)” (Benford & Snow, 2000: p. 614). Otherwise stated, frames
diagnose a problem, suggest a resolution, and give rationale for others to pursue this change (Benford & Snow, 2000). Subsequently, framing involves the strategic creation of these sets of beliefs and meanings. In sum, frames-and framing-are very important to meaning-making processes of social movements.

Diffusion, or "the spread of practices through a population of actors" (Campbell, 2005: p. 53) is yet another important cognitive process and studies addressing diffusion concern themselves with the content, rate, degree, and conditions for practices to spread. Interestingly, diffusion studies also require acknowledgement of it as a cognitive process that relies on other cognitive processes; that is, it seems to involve or interact with other kinds of cognitive processes. For instance, diffusion can occur through coercive, normative, and mimetic processes (Campbell, 2005; Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin, & Suddaby, 2008). This essentially means that the spread of a practice could occur because it was forced, because it became a widely accepted value or behavior, and/or because it has been adopted by elite others (Greenwood et al., 2008). As an example, Hiatt, Sine, & Tolbert (2009) provide a helpful illustration of diffusion occurring through normative processes when they explain how the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) changed the normative environment. The WCTM recruited members and required them to make an explicit commitment to abstain from alcohol and to advocate this abstention amongst their friends of families. Doing so facilitated the success of their movement because they changed the values, or norms, centered on drinking alcohol.

Diffusion can also occur through translation (i.e. process by which practices that travel from one site to another are modified and implemented by adopters in different ways so that they will blend into and fit the local and institutional context" (Campbell, 2005: p.55) and bricolage (i.e. "innovative recombination of elements that constitutes a new way of configuring
organizations, social movements institutions, and other forms of social activity” (Campbell, 2005: p.56). Less is known however about the mechanisms and processes of translation that allow for processes to be adopted and institutionalized on a case by case basis (Gray et al., 2015; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008; Zilber, 2006). In sum, the mechanism of change that I have reviewed here- be they environmental, relational, or cognitive- provide insight into the potential mechanisms for creating and sustaining inclusive workplaces.

**Concluding Remarks on Stigma and Micro-foundations of Structural Change**

Although they are complementary, the nexus of these two literatures – stigma and micro-foundations of change-have received scant consideration. I address this lacuna through the two essays presented herein. Overall, there is a wealth of information, from sociological and social psychological perspectives, on the process of stigmatization. This rich body of literature emphasizes the social process that breeds and perpetuates stigma in society overall. These perspectives have been applied to the context of work and organizations, and findings shed light on the impact of stigma for individuals grappling with personal, professional, and organizational related stigmas. However, most of this research continues to focus on the marked or the stigmatized, with less focus on the marker or non-stigmatized actor (with notable exceptions such as Hebl & Dovidio, 2005). Also, while there is a stronger understanding of the detrimental effects of stigma and how to mitigate those negative effects, less is understood about how to undo the stigma, or devalued association, with the mark itself. Within organizations, what are the micro-foundations of stigmatized experiences? That is, what language and behaviors across interactions make individuals feel stigmatized, or de-valued? And importantly, how are these experiences dismantled or undone? Furthermore, what can the non-stigmatized – not just the stigmatized group members- do to contribute to this process?
I integrate the stigma literature with that on the micro-foundations of change to suggest that perhaps these questions can be addressed by unpacking how individuals incite change within and across organizations. On this front, the literature on social movements and institutional theory provide insight into the micro-processes (namely, the actors, cognitions, and behaviors) involved in creating an array of changes in organizations. I posit that integrating these two literatures in such a way will offer fresh insights into changes specific to creating inclusive organizations and facilitating de-stigmatization.
CHAPTER 3

ESSAY 1: BRIDGING THE GAP: FACILITATING DE-STIGMATIZATION THROUGH GO BETWEENs

Stigma divides by breeding stereotypes, cultivating bias, and fostering inequality. Due to this, organizational scholars have put considerable effort into addressing large gaps in opportunity, or structures of inequity, that result from de-valuing or discrediting (i.e. stigmatizing) others (Hebl et al., 2002; Ragins et al., 2007). At the same time, the mundane, day-to-day interactions experienced by employees facilitate smaller (yet powerful) inequity, or micro-inequities (Sue et al., 2007; Sue et al., 2008; Offerman et al., 2014). Importantly, these day-to-day interactions prove to be far more pervasive and meaningful than expected, as they contribute to significant differences in career success, job withdrawal, turnover, performance, and a host of physical and psychological health outcomes (Jones et al., 2015). The role of interactions in the creation of exclusive and inequitable structures suggests that such structures are indeed created. If these structures are socially created, then they can also be (re)negotiated and dismantled. Thus one question warranting further attention pertains to how organizational actors can serve as bridges between dissimilar groups in order to dismantle the small inequitable structures that, in turn, yield detrimental outcomes at group, organizational, and institutional levels. How can organization members who are markers (i.e. members of dominant groups) encourage interaction that facilitates a more inclusive environment, one with less stereotypes, bias, and unnecessary division between demographic groups? In this essay I seek to answer this question by investigating how members of the more powerful, mainstream, non-stigmatized group build bridges between others like themselves and members of marginalized, stigmatized groups.
Stigma is also relational. Even though it facilitates less interaction between members of marker and marked groups, it is perpetuated (or diminished) through inevitable interactions and relationships that they end up forming (Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984). Often times, these inevitable interactions occur within the workplace. Thus, organizational members play significant roles in perpetuating or diminishing the devaluation of their colleagues within their workplace (Creed & Scully, 2000). While individuals with a stigmatized identity (the marked) are known to manage it in ways that can help to perpetuate or diminish others’ perceptions of devaluation (Clair et al., 2005; Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010; Creed & Scully, 2000), individuals without the non-stigmatized identity (markers) also play a central role in the undoing of stigmatization because their absence of the stigmatized mark grants them more power (Link & Phelan, 2001; Jones et al., 1984).

The markers individuals that attempt to do this have a unique role in which they- on one hand - connect with group members that are affiliated with marginalization and, on the other hand, connect with group members that are affiliated with privilege. Their most prized potential is thus the ability to facilitate bringing these groups together and pushing them towards collaboration; but they must first reconcile the groups’ different perspectives within themselves. How does one reconcile the conflicting demands from their roles and relationships with members of groups that are often divided? I begin examining this through grounded theory methodology consisting of interviews with job coaches that work with individuals with autism and related disabilities, and I use the framework of boundary theory to understand emerging findings that shed light on how individuals manage these multiple and, at times, conflicting perspectives. In doing so, I contribute to the literature on stigma and boundaries in several important ways.
First, I contribute by outlining a process of localized de-stigmatization whereby key organizational actors create more inclusive workplaces by developing effective workplace relationships between the marked and the marker. This process of de-stigmatization is ‘local’ because it is not describing a change that is limited to the confines of the organization, one that has not occurred outside of its boundaries. The model, grounded in the data, demonstrates the sensemaking and sensegiving activities that take place in order to build and maintain relationships between the marked and the marker. In particular, it suggests that there are specific boundary work tactics for sensegiving and sensegiving about the value of the marked and the marker. As a result of the boundary work, value is crafted, or levels of functional, attribute related, and relational dimensions of value are changed, towards the end goal of localized de-stigmatization.

Second, the model contributes by shedding light on the go-between as an integral actor in facilitating localized de-stigmatization in organizations. Agents of change are increasingly discussed as organizational actors that warrant attention by researchers because they can facilitate social change inside of the organizational boundaries (Sonenshein, 2006; Sonenshein, 2016). At the same time, organizational change agents often have to deal with conflicting role demands, conflicts that mirror a duality, paradox, and/or equivocality (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Sonenshein, 2016). My model reflects one set of change agents – go betweens – and the juxtaposing ideals and demands around enacting their role, namely to act as helping professionals on the one hand and as business professionals on the other hand. It furthermore highlights the cognitive mechanism of psychological flexibility that they use for coping with these demands.

Third, I not only address the stigma associated with a label, but findings shed light on the
stigmatized social interaction behaviors and how organizational actors can help organizations to be more open to marginalized interaction norms. Social interaction involves language and behaviors that are guided by expectations about what is acceptable. As strong signifiers of the norm, these expectations are often unspoken and taken for granted even though they are extremely powerful (Goffman, 1967). The workplace is no exception to this conceptualization of social interaction. In fact, one could consider an organization as a large driver of interaction norms, a ‘group’ or ‘collective’ which informs its members on matters regarding how to interact with each other and even makes distinctions about how to talk to people at different levels or different departments of the organization (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Indeed, interactions abound in organizations, yet the notion that interactions are indicators of status and stigma (and that interaction differences are markers of stigma) has just recently been taken under serious consideration in the organizational literature (Gray, Purdy, & Ansari, in press). Thus I contribute by highlighting how de-valuation around a particularly important yet understudied dimension of stigma-interactions, or socially disruptive behaviors--are located and re (negotiated) by the non-stigmatized actor.

Lastly, Barth (1969) argued that “we are better off studying the boundaries of the culture than the ‘stuff’ (or content) that constitutes culture.” To the extent that marked and marker groups represent dominant and subordinate groups, this warrants an investigation into the location of the different boundaries of conflicting groups; that is, where does one group end and another begin? At the same time, little is known about the tactics that individuals use to not only “walk on the edge” of (Krebs, 1999), but also to bridge, marked and marker group boundaries. Existing research on boundary work tactics refer to segmentation and integration in the context of work home interfaces (Ashforth et al., 2000; Kreiner et al, 2006; 2009). Should we, thus, also
expect the relatively non-stigmatized organizational member to use these tactics with members of the two groups? While existing research has demonstrated boundary spanners’ importance in facilitating exchange between groups (Malinowski, 1922), serving as international diplomats (Ikle, 1964), and enabling communication between ethnic groups (Heskin & Heffner, 1987), understanding how the non-stigmatized boundary worker takes on a unique, and potentially unpopular, role of bridging the two groups within their workplace is less understood. I thus hope that my model contributes to the stigma literature by highlighting cognitive, discursive, and behavioral strategies for drawing and negotiating boundaries around the stigmatized and non-stigmatized.

**BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW**

My initial interest at the outset of data collection was on the marker, how they aim for inclusion, and in particular how they build bridges between the marked and other markers. A theme that emerged early on in my data collection efforts was that of the go-between and boundary work that they engaged in. Thus, in line with the iterative nature of my chosen methodology (grounded theory), I revised my research question to focus on the particular actor and behavior (the go-between, boundary work) and their role in facilitating inclusion. In this section I will review this term as it relates to the stigma and boundary literature.

**Stigma: Marked Relationships and the Role of the Go-Between**

The divisive characteristics of stigma are powerful and compounding. Seminal work on stigmatization reveals that the cognitive process of categorizing, labeling a person, and associating false beliefs (i.e. stereotypes) to that label leads people to become mentally and physically detached (Crocker et al. 1998; Dovidio, Major, & Crocker, 2000; Jones et al., 1984). The detachment or separation caused by stigma not only hinders the possibility of undoing the
division, but it facilitates further division and subsequently allows for false beliefs to be strengthened and confirmed. Coincidentally, the often avoided mixed contacts, or “the moments when stigmatized and normals are in the same ‘social situation’” (Goffman, 1963; p. 12), can help alter the beliefs held about a stigmatized group, thus playing a fundamental role in slowing down or stopping stigma on its destructive path (Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984; Link & Phelan, 2001). The power of mixed contacts suggests that relationships are central to the stigmatization (and de-stigmatization) process.

Jones et al (1984) emphasize this point, noting that “it is generally understood that the stigmatizing process is relational” (p. 5). In other words, it takes two (or more). Marked relationships, the relationships that occur as a result of mixed contacts, consist of two actors: the marker (i.e. the person with the power to discredit a stigmatized individual) and the marked individual (i.e. the person with a ‘perceived or inferred condition of deviation from a prototype or norm that might initiate the stigmatizing process; Jones et al., 1984; p. 8). Such relationships are moreover often characterized by discomfort because the individuals without the stigmatized label become anxious or afraid of being around the person with the stigmatized label due threat and fear rooted in false beliefs that they have been indoctrinated to hold onto or due to concern that they will unintentionally insult them (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Jones et al (1984) call markers that build relationships with- and ease the tensions among - both the marked and the marker as ‘go-betweens’ and note that they are different than what may be considered an ally.

As a ‘go-between’, the marker, or non-stigmatized person, has the “delicate task of conveying that she doesn’t view the stigmatized, or marked, person’s identity as ‘spoiled’ (Jones et al., 1984: 195). This is a unique position to be in as it has made them “intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it" (Goffman, 1963: 29). They
consequently become marginal because they attribute more value to the marked individual than most others do (Goffman, 1963). Go-betweens are noted to likely pass through some kind of ‘heart-changing’ experience before they understand the marked person’s perspectives but once they do they gain a dual perspective—that of the marker and the marked. They are thus in a position to provide a similar ‘heart-changing’ experience for other markers, showing why they should attribute more value to the marked person and how they can adapt their language and behaviors to do so (Goffman, 1963). Based on the emerging findings and given that creating inclusive workplaces requires effectively working with several markers of differences and weakening the division among them, I draw from the literature on boundaries to gain understanding of how demarcations or dividing lines have been discussed in the past and to develop a point of departure for the focus of my grounded study.

**Boundaries**

Boundaries or “physical, temporal, and cognitive limits that define domains as separate from one another and define components within domains” (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006: p. 1319) are pervasive. People are constantly required to manage and span boundaries of work and home, groups, and organizations (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). Furthermore, organizations increasingly rely on employees that can skillfully manage relationships across team, departmental, and national boundaries. Typically referred to as boundary spanners (or individuals responsible for contacting people outside of their organizational group; Friedman & Podolny, 1992: p. 29), these individuals enable organizational efficiency and effectiveness through their management of inter-group relations (Thompson, 1967; Friedman & Podolny, 1992).

Moreover, boundaries are particularly useful for my first study because they give insight
into micro-processes involved in aligning people separated not by organizational, but instead by demographic, differences. To date, little is known about the experience of go-betweens in organizations and the process they use to manage and negotiate the boundaries between the marked and marker. While existing research proves their importance for facilitating exchanges between groups (Malinowski, 1922), serving as international diplomats (Ikle, 1964), and enabling communication between ethnic groups (Heskin & Heffner, 1987), less is understood about how people working across boundaries of difference facilitate productive relations between individuals from dominant and marginalized groups in the workplace. Even less is known about the content of the boundary work, or the cognitive, emotional, discursive, and behavioral strategies taken to re-work the boundaries of demographic differences between people in order to create an environment inclusivity within organizations.

The first study aims to address the limitation in the literature by honing in on individuals that serve as go-betweens, those individuals that not only span- but also engage in boundary work - in order to facilitate productive relationships for organizational effectiveness and foster inclusive work environments. I specifically ask the following research questions:

(1a) How do ‘go-betweens’ build and facilitate relationships between stigmatized and the non-stigmatized?

(1b) How do ‘go-betweens’ initiate and facilitate the process of dismantling stigma?

CONTEXT³

I have chosen to explore answers to my research questions in the context of job coaches, members of a unique and emerging professional group providing valuable insights into that of a ‘go-between’ for organizational and inclusion related purposes. Job coaches, generally speaking, help members of historically disadvantaged groups seek, obtain, and maintain jobs; they do so by

³ For more information about the history of autism spectrum disorders and disability related employment policies and advocacy affecting adults with autism, see Table 1.
educating not only the job seeker but also the potential employer and co-workers. I particularly focus on job coaches working with adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), a developmental disorder associated with sensory and social challenges.

**Autism and Employment**

An extremely rich context for understanding the evolution towards creating inclusive workplaces is that of autism and employment. The term “autism spectrum disorder (ASD)” has its origins in the early twentieth century but now refers to “neurodevelopmental impairments in communication and social interaction and unusual ways of perceiving and processing information” (World Health Organization, 2013). Since then the term, deriving from the Greek word “autos”, meaning “self”, has increasingly been used to diagnose children’s ability to consider alternative approaches to reality. Today, autism is well established as a spectrum disorder in which individuals with ASD display a range of social and cognitive abilities - some are considered to be lower functioning, having less verbal skills or lower cognitive ability whereas others are considered to be higher functioning, having typical cognitive development (Frith, 1989; Scheffgen, Happe, Anderson, & Frith, 2000). While individuals with autism have a range of skills, physical and cognitive abilities, interests, and challenges depending on where they are on the spectrum, visible manifestations of autism for higher functioning individuals include social interaction impairments, difficulty with eye contact, and sensory sensitivities (e.g. bright lights, certain colors, loud or multiple sounds occurring at once).

Until recently, the idea of autism in adulthood was overlooked - so much so that adults with autism have become the “hidden faces of autism”. Their hidden status resulted in limited available data regarding many experiences of adults with autism. However, initial reports show extremely low rates of employment (Shattuck et al 2012; Bernick & Holden, 2015). In fact, the
reported rate of unemployment rate for adults with autism from different independent ranges from 70% to 90%, depending on the study (Bernick & Holden, 2015), a rate that has remained stagnant since 1990 (Burkhauser, Houtenville, & Daly, 2002). Hendricks (2010) summarizes the state of employment for adults with autism as follows:

“Even for individuals who are considered to be higher functioning, employment results are appalling. Adults experience underemployment, switch jobs frequently, have difficulty adjusting to new job settings, make less money than their counterparts, and are much less likely to be employed than typically developing peers, individuals with less severe language disorders, or individuals with learning disabilities”.

In fact, my research interests for this dissertation were, in part, motivated by results from a related qualitative project on autism in the workplace with two co-investigators. Results from that project corroborate the concern that adults with autism experience exclusivity due to the social differences that they bring into workplaces. Evidence of this is provided by the common theme of under-employment and unemployment across several of that project’s interviews. For example, informants on the autism spectrum stated that:

…and I like my job but it’s you know called underemployment. I only need a high school diploma for the job…I’m not using my bachelor degree.

I tried. I tried to get a job at [company name] in the late night shift and I couldn’t pass the pre-employment test because I did not fit the psychological profile of somebody who would be happy doing that work.

I was told that my contract would not be renewed because of my personality fit. I did not fit into the school environment.

Finding another job. Finding another job with Asperger’s. [Diary entry, in response to the question “What kinds of things did you think about while at work]”

Due to this dire state of employment, many advocates use the image of falling off of a cliff to explain the transition from high school to adulthood for people with autism. This is because the individual receives developmental support in the classroom through education but, after graduation, the legal mandate to provide services to them ends, and services encouraging
unemployment, and dependence on state and federal funds, kick in. In response to this dire state, many have suggested a solution involving a network of multiple actors (advocacy groups, parents, and organizational leaders). Job coaches, an emerging profession that involves facilitating productive relationships between employers and employees, are increasingly at the forefront of this multi-actor solution (Bernick & Holden, 2015). Next, I detail how the job coaching profession developed and became central to changing the landscape of employment for adults with autism.

**Rising Importance of Job Coaches**

If autism and employment serves as a rich context for understanding the creation of inclusive workplaces, then job coaches serve as the ideal informants to understand the people facilitating the inclusion. Over the course of approximately 45 years, the role of the job coach has inched more and more into the spotlight of autism and employment dialogue. Job coaches’ primary goal is to create integrated employment for individuals with a host of disabilities and/or stigmatized identities (e.g. cerebral palsy, veteran status, etc.). The emergence of the profession is heavily motivated by disability policy and legislation, namely two job coaching models (supported employment and customized employment) through changes in the Rehabilitation Act, that bring unique opportunities and challenges for job coaches working with individuals with autism.

Beginning in the 1970’s, a series of policy changes created more opportunities to build a profession focused on providing services to individuals with disabilities. In 1973, the Rehabilitation Act was passed, prohibiting discrimination of people with disabilities by federal agencies. Although it made funds available for employment support, most funding went to sheltered workshops (often referred to as segregated workplaces) and not to integration into
mainstream organizations (Bernick & Holden, 2015). In 1986, an amendment to the Rehabilitation Act occurred, introducing the first model of job coaching: supported employment (SE). Supported employment grants were distributed to all state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies and their funds were intended to provide support through job development, coaching, and worksite supports for individuals encountering significant limitations to getting a job due to their disability (Griffin et al., 2007).

The goal of job coaching under the supported employment (SE) model was to enable employees with significant disabilities to “obtain and maintain a meaningful community employment” (Garcia-Villamisar, Wehman, & Diaz-Navarro, 2002: p. 309). Job coaches were expected to achieve this goal by working with co-workers and employers to design and build supports at work for the individual with a disability so that over time the employer and employee learn how to work together effectively and independent of the job coach. In its infancy, the future of supported employment seemed promising, evidenced by rapid growth of its use from its inception in 1986 (10,000 people) to 1995 (139,000 people) (Wehman et al., 1997). However, the use of supported employment sharply declined and the use of segregated workplaces or sheltered workshops and day programs as the predominant form of disability employment sharply inclined.

The fruits of several concerted efforts to change the use of segregated workplaces surfaced at the turn of the twenty-first century. In 2001, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) was authorized under the Department of Labor and, by 2006, they began the Employment First initiative which asserted that “…all working age adults and youths with disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated within the general workforce, working side-by-side with co-workers without and youths without disabilities, making minimum wage or higher”
(APSE EF Statement). Then in 2014, the Rehabilitation Act was amended once again-this time to allow funding for the use of customized employment (CE). Although espousing the fundamental values of supported employment, CE strayed from the emphasis on segregation that was still an option under SE. It explicitly emphasized: zero exclusion, partial participation, zero instructional inference (i.e. sheltered workshops), and interdependence as its core values. Job coaches working under the CE model are thus not only responsible for identifying job duties and goals of the employee, but also for several other tasks including but not limited to: negotiating employer expectations, focusing on the needs of the employee while meeting those of the employer; representing the employee in negotiation with employer; and facilitating employment in integrated environments that offer at least minimum wage (Griffin et al., 2008).

Just as policy changes were being made for disabilities, the first generation of children diagnosed with autism that had received supportive education were beginning to age out of the education system, heading towards the proverbial employment cliff. Consider the unique social challenges confronted by the adult with autism in which many aspects of work (understanding of social cues in interviews, meetings, and casual workplace conversation with co-workers and managers to name a few) become potentials pitfalls for mistakes, misunderstandings, rejections, and/or termination. As a result, autism job coaches became necessary to not only do what job coaches for workers without autism do, but to also help them with the social aspect of work: “contacting potential employers, walking the client through the application process, assisting the client in effective use of networks, and serving as an intermediary with the employer after placement” (Bernick & Holden, 2015). Evidence of the job coaching profession’s importance can be gleaned from statistics about its estimated growth. Today, it is estimated that there are 120,000 jobs that fit in the description of job coaches in the United States, and the profession is
estimated to grow faster than average (upwards of 13%) with 36,000 more job openings surfacing by 2024 (O*Net).

**Relevance of Context for Essay 1**

With the Employment First movement picking up steam plus the implementation of customized employment and the promises it holds for integrated employment, the attention and importance placed upon job coaches to create inclusion for adults with autism has reached an all-time high. They are now -more than ever- expected to weaken intergroup boundaries by resolving discrepancies between two groups across an array of workplaces. In doing so, they provide invaluable insight for Essay #1, shedding light on the experience of individuals that facilitate boundary re-negotiation within organizations - boundary workers.

**METHOD**

I used a qualitative, grounded theory approach for data collection and analysis in Essay 1. Grounded theory entails the collection and analysis of data in order to construct theories that are "grounded" (emerging from) the data themselves (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This particular methodology is useful for my study because it involves "open ended inquiry about a phenomenon of interest" that is not fully theoretically addressed through existing literature (Edmondson & McManus, 2007: p. 1161). That is, although stigma and boundaries have been studied in the past, their use for creating inclusive environments by change agents is not fully addressed in the organizational literature. I take a constructivist approach to analysis, which requires the researcher to engage in iteration, or to refine interview questions as interesting insights from the data emerge (Charmaz, 2006). Below I outline the steps I took to engage in data collection and analysis.

**Data Collection**
In Essay #1, I was interested in how markers facilitate inclusion by bringing together members of the dominant and marginalized groups in workplaces. To understand this, I used semi-structured interviews with job coaches as my primary source of data. In addition, I used several supplemental sources of secondary data: interviews with their leaders and beneficiaries; training manuals; webinar trainings on the WIOA legislations; news articles about job coaches, and participant observation in an online job coach training that lasted 12 weeks.

In order to gain insight into the landscape of this research context, I spent the majority of summer and fall of 2014 visiting organizations and businesses that advocate for changes to the stigmatized architecture of employment. I visited two sites and had preliminary interviews with 29 people involved in changing the structure of employment for people with autism. After analysis of preliminary data, I revised interview protocols (see Appendix A, Table 2 for protocol evolution) and engaged in a more focused (purposive) sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1968), targeting job coaches in states with varying levels of success in the employment and disability area. In order to get better understanding of how states were ranked, I used the United Cerebral Palsy Case for Inclusion list, a list that was referenced by several informants in my preliminary data collection. UCP is an organization with a mission to “educate, advocate, and provide support services through an affiliate network to ensure a life without limits for people with a spectrum of disabilities” (Case for Inclusion, p. 3), and not only cerebral palsy.

In the end, I spoke with a total of 72 individuals, including 40 individuals with job coaching experience across 8 states (Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Washington), 22 leaders of organizations that worked with job coaches and individuals with autism and 5 employees with autism that worked with job coaches. In addition, I spoke with a host of representatives from agencies that deal with employment and
autism (and related disabilities) in order to gain understanding of their perspective of the landscape of employment and the role of job coaches. Questions from the protocol concerning my research question included: “Based on your experiences, what is the world of work like for your clients? What do you do to help them transition into the world of work? What are some challenges and benefits associated with the work that you do?” The interviews were held over the phone or in person, depending on my and the informant’s availability. Interviews lasted an average of approximately one hour.

A vast majority of the job coaches that I spoke to were women (all but 9) and about half of the coaches had prior personal or professional experience with individuals with disabilities. All of the job coaches that I spoke to had ‘caseloads’ of clients with autism diagnoses; 18 of the job coaches not only worked with individuals with autism, but also worked with individuals with other disabilities such as Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The job coaches’ caseloads ranged from 1 to 23 clients, with most working with 10-15 clients. They helped their clients get jobs in a range of organizations across various industries. For example, they assisted clients with obtaining and keeping jobs at movie theatres, grocery stores, cafés and restaurants, major retail chains, car dealerships, consulting firms, yoga studios, libraries, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations in the community. On top of this, a couple of the job coaches even mentioned helping their clients start their own businesses based on their personal interests in areas like art, baking, and becoming a vendor of goods for local companies. Informants’ tenure in the job coaching profession ranged from 1 to 36 years of experience, with many having 3-8 years of experience. This range of tenure was beneficial, as it allowed me to gain perspective from job coaches that were new to the profession and its expectations as well as those job coaches who could share insight about how the profession had
evolved over time. Although it varied by state, the median wage for job coaches was an hourly wage of $16.54 or an annual salary of $34,390.

Data Analysis

Coding is a central tenet of the grounded theory process of analysis. In order to code, I used an analytic method that is often used and cited within management research (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006, 2009). The process first entails open coding, which requires defining what I see in the data (e.g. job coach strategies, job coach challenges) (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 2007). Once the audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, I developed preliminary labels for themes that I saw in the data by staying close to the language of the participants and using “in vivo” codes (exact language of the informants) to describe passages of text as much as possible (Charmaz, 2006). I then engaged in axial coding, or linking categories to sub-categories by specifying their properties and dimensions (Charmaz, 2006). As I coded, I created and updated a coding dictionary that had “parent codes” (main categories) and “children codes” (sub-categories); doing so aided clearer insight into richer categories versus those that were more idiosyncratic. As previously alluded to, I refined my interview protocol and continuously sought answers to fine-grained questions about those categories (Charmaz, 2006). I also wrote memos after coding each interview in order to capture my general impressions and experiences of participants (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Throughout the process, I have shared memos, coded documents, dictionaries, and data structures with my co-authors in order to address how categories could be further refined as well as which categories offer the richest theoretical insight.

The standards of “validity” that are typically used to assess a quantitative study do not fit the assumptions of reality that guide the kind of qualitative data collection and analysis I am
using. That is, instead of a positivistic lens of reality that is “out there” and easily captured, I subscribe to the interpretivist lens that suggests that reality, including research findings, is co-constructed. Given this fundamental paradigmatic difference, there are four key criteria to establishing trustworthiness while reporting on qualitative data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility concerns adequate and authentic representation of others’ lived experiences. One way to achieve this is by spending more time in the research setting and by making sure participants agree with your accounts of their reality. I aimed to achieve this through member checks, participant observation, and multiple interactions with participants.

Second, transferability, similar to the notion of generalizability in traditional quantitative research domains, pertains to applicability of the findings to a broader social experience. This can be achieved through the use of thick description in which I outline the authenticity of my experience with the informants in my study. I have strived to do this in the findings section below.

Third, dependability refers to the stability of research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I sought out to achieve this by discussing codes with co-authors as I engaged in open and axial coding. Lastly, confirmability refers to whether or not others would be able to replicate the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability is attainable by being transparent about the research process. My hope is to achieve this by being as transparent as possible about methods of data collection as well as coding procedures.

**FINDINGS**

Overall, findings showcase an effortful process of going between, or bringing together members from dominant (marker) and marginalized (marked) groups through engagement in interpersonal boundary work. The notion of ‘going between’ has been referred to in existing
stigma and social networks literatures. For instance, in their study of self-monitors in a 116
member high technology firm, Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass (2001) conceptualize go-betweens
through the lens of networks, as individuals that facilitate “bridging the ‘structural holes’
between disconnected others, facilitate resource flows and knowledge sharing across the
organizations” (p.121). They found that high self-monitors often landed ‘high betweenness’
positions in the organization. In addition, Brass (1994) found that individuals with ‘higher
betweenness’ in their informal networks had greater social influence. Moreover, in their study
on network weavers, or “organizations that provide network relations for others”, Ingram &
Torfason (2010) found that organizations reaped benefits from bringing conflicting actors
together.

Still, unique insights can be distilled from my informants’ experiences. Whereas existing
research defines go-betweens based on their network positioning and brokering behaviors within
and across organizations, the go-betweens in my study are defined in terms of their brokering
between two particular groups – the marked and marker - within the workplace that are not
different based on organizational-related demarcations. Furthermore, they are defined by not
only spanning between these two groups, but also the boundary work needed to do so effectively.
The boundary work tactic used by go-betweens differ across three distinct, yet inter-related,
stages: marker boundary intrusion, marked-marker boundary bridging, and fading from
marked-marker boundary. Moreover, the desired outcome throughout and at the end of these
three stages is localized de-stigmatization, where within the organization effective marked
relationships have been created and upheld through sensemaking, sensebreaking, and
sensegiving about the value related to perceived differences. What follows is a detailed
description of (a) the desired outcome of localized de-stigmatization and (b) each stage of the

going-between process that leads to localized de-stigmatization. This process represented through Figure 1 in Appendix B and illustrative quotes for the major themes are provided in Table 4 in Appendix A. When I provide quotes below, the informants’ personal identification has been removed and replaced with pseudonyms. The pseudonyms can be interpreted as acronyms (JCL stands for ‘job coach leader’; JC stands for ‘job coach’; AL stands for ‘agency leader’) followed by randomized numbers associated with informants.

**Desired Outcome: Localized De-stigmatization**

Before diving into the three stages of boundary work, I foreshadow to what I found to be the informants’ desired outcome. That is, what were they striving for? Data overwhelmingly revealed the desired outcome of ‘localized de-stigmatization’ and spoke to the importance of adding and sustaining value, what I refer to as *crafted value*. Value refers to a person’s worth or importance to their group or organization, and perceiving value is a key component of social identification processes (Ellemers, Sleebos, Stam, & de Gilder, 2013; Smith, Tyler, Hu, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998; Tyler & Blader, 2003). Training resources and informant quotes from my data collection reflected the need to increase perceptions of the marked person’s worth in the workplace. I provide one such illustrative example from training resources below:

Instead of that mind set, I believe that every individual with a disability, or without one for that matter, brings value to the workplace. The amount of work or whatever the tasks that the person is assigned to do will benefit the company. If we go about looking at the benefit that is brought to the company then our approach to the employer is going to be that the individual will accomplish all of the assigned job tasks. You talk with the employer about how the new employee can will save the company money. Or you might identify how other employees will have time to do another set of tasks if the individual is hired to do a specific set of tasks. Therefore, we don’t approach that topic thinking that the individual is going to do less than anyone else. Rather we approach the situation with what benefit the company will gain from hiring the person with a disability. [Job Coach Training Lesson]
Job coaches tried to change the marker’s perception of value along what I found to be three dimensions: functional, attributional, and relational. Functional-related value is the assessment of the stereotypes, or false beliefs, about the person’s ability to successfully accomplish the tasks required by the job. For example, informants often noted that that, although in the beginning managers and co-workers of organizations might have their doubts about the employee’s ability to perform, their doubts were quickly assuaged. As evidence of this, one informant noted that “…and 99.9% of the organizations find that the person with the disability is going to be one of the best employees they ever had” (JC9).

On the other hand, attributional value is the assessment of the person’s value or worth based on stereotypes about whatever attribute that makes them stand out: their behavior, interaction style or preferences, needs, desires, thought processes, and emotions. This mindset change is evidenced by changes in managers’ and co-workers’ statements and behaviors. For example, I spoke with a supervisor who had been working with a job coach and a particular employee with autism. This supervisor stated that, over the course of time, their perceptions about the fragility of the employee had been re-shaped due the job coach’s tutelage. They went on to say that, at first “…we treated him with kid’s gloves” because they were afraid of hurting his feelings or pushing the employee to a point of discomfort. However, over time this same supervisor stated that he “found that raising expectations made him a better employee” (M1). Taken together, the job coach helped to re-shape the supervisor’s misperceptions about the needs and emotions of the employee, particularly their fragility, a common false belief about individuals with a stigmatizing label.

Lastly, relational value refers to the importance or worth of the relationship between the marked and the marker. The job coaches in my study described “successes” as instances in
which there was a noticeable change in the worth of the relationships between the individual
with autism and their colleagues within the organization. Through the process of going between,
the importance of the relationship increased as a byproduct of the other increasing dimensions of
value (functional, attributional). One of the training resources provides evidence of this
relational value being crafted, noting the following: “as critical as discovery is, it is possible to
overlook a critical variable to success: the need for a newly defined relationship between
employers and job seekers with significant disabilities…” (Training Manual).

Overall, the change they described, when addressed within the broader literature of
stigma, links to the idea of localized de-stigmatization, where within the organization effective
marked relationships have been created and upheld through sensemaking, sensebreaking, and
sensegiving about the value related to perceived differences. Go-betweens looked for evidence
of localized de-stigmatization through managers and co-workers’ perceptions about and
behaviors towards the individual with autism. If they experienced a changed mindset about
functional, attributional, and/or relational value, or worthiness, of the otherwise stigmatized
employee, localized de-stigmatization had occurred.

In the next section, I begin to unpack the idea of going between. I outline the
intrapersonal boundary work that go-betweens experienced due to juxtaposing role demands to
be a caring professional and business professional. Then, I describe each of the three distinct yet
inter-related stages of interpersonal boundary work that the informants took in their pursuit of
planting the seed for localized de-stigmatization to occur. Each stage (marker boundary
intrusion, marked-marker boundary bridging, and fading from the marked-marker boundary) (a)
consists of dismantling the boundaries that exist between the two groups and (b) is influenced by
the internal boundary work the informants engage in.
Before proceeding, a brief caveat is warranted: the path to achieving this end state of localized de-stigmatization was not always as fruitful as one would hope. What I outline in the following sections is the ideal process; but it is possible that, within any of these stages, the value could not be appropriately crafted. If and when that happened, the job coach would start all over again (but at a different organization) with that particular individual with autism.

**Go-Betweens**

The informants described themselves and their role in a way that, overall, can be described as a go-between. For instance, one job coach explained their job by indicating that:

“We have to advocate for the clients and be that go-between for the employers and the employees because our guys are kind of like ‘in their world’” (JC7). According to them, being a go-between could be characterized by ‘working through’ the interests, expectations, and concerns of both the individual with autism (member of a stigmatized group) and the employers and co-workers without autism (members of a relatively non-stigmatized group) as they embark on the employment relationship (JC7). This notion of ‘working through’ the issues that keep members of the group from reaching and maintaining an employment relationship served as evidence of the informants’ need to break through cognitive and physical boundaries, or demarcations of difference, in order to do their job. I will further unpack the different kinds of interpersonal boundary work they employed in the next section. But first, I address the intrapersonal boundary work that they engaged in.

**Intrapersonal Boundary Work.** Not only did the job coaches refer to going between these two groups in their efforts to bring them together, but they are also referred to going between expectations of exuding behaviors that reflected the role of a helping professional and behaviors that reflected the role of being a sales professional. Informants noted the pervasive
challenge of work that requires them to navigate a juxtaposition of these mindsets. Their perception was that on the one hand, they feel the need to have compassion for, or ‘suffer with’ (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014), the person with autism. Here, the language involved in discussing the helping professional role used vocabulary that is often associated with human services and the importance of being aware of the person’s full self and life challenges (e.g. barriers, complexities, dignity, and helping.). On the other hand, they were expected to be an emotionless business person that viewed the person with autism as a product to be marketed. The job coaches furthermore spoke to the need to bring in qualities of both roles, sometimes simultaneously, in order to do their job. Often times, the language involved in discussing the business professional role used vocabulary that is often associated with marketing and sales (e.g. customer, marketing, products, etc.). One job coach leader (who also had job coaching experience) acknowledged the different roles that job coaches had to play, noting that people interested in job coaching “need to be salesmen, for one. But they are selling compassion as well as selling clients. They really have to have an understanding of people, all kinds of people, able and disable” (JC18).

This need to have this dual mindset was corroborated through the secondary data, namely the training manuals and programs offered to individuals that wanted to be effective job coaches. On the one hand, training suggested using a ‘marketing mindset’. On the other hand it suggested the importance of making it a priority to intimately understand each job seeker’s individual challenges and barriers to employment; otherwise stated, training suggested that they figure out ways to be compassionate towards, or ‘suffer with’, the job seekers. Below are two quotes that illustrate this juxtaposition:
things will be put in place in order to make sure we have a marketing mindset in our organization - we will be marketing focused, customer based, customer responsive and we will assure customer satisfaction. (*Job Coach Training*)

...it is more important than ever to discover both the true life complexities that create barriers to many job seekers and the unique contributions they may have to offer. (*Training Manual*)

Informants thus felt that, in order to fulfill their role as go betweens, they needed to enact behaviors similar to that of a business professional and, at the same time, a helping professional-behaviors that to them were juxtaposing and difficult to mutually make sense of and enact.

My analysis of the data suggests that the job coaches resolved this role duality and conflict of the going between process by maintaining *psychological flexibility*. Psychological flexibility, a fundamental concept of a psychopathology theory (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, ACT; Hayes, Stroshal, & Wilson, 1999) has been defined as “an ability to focus on the present moment and, depending on what the situation affords, persist with or change one’s (even inflexible, stereotypical) behavior in the pursuit of goals and values” (Bond, Flaxman, & Bunce, 2008). In the case of the job coaches that I interviewed, it appears that go-betweens managed the different role boundaries by building and keeping flexible boundaries around them. To be sure, informants discussed the need to be nimble in their mentalities, behaviors, and physical spaces, and they talked about being patient and being open to new ideas, perspectives, and experiences.

Basically just have a lot of patience is the key for me. You just got to have a lot of patience. (*JC8*)

...change has to be a huge part of... the change and movement and complexity. That's just part of the job. I don't see how anyone can do the work without having skills in those areas. (*JC29*)

One particular coach went on to note that having this kind of flexibility helped by “...setting those boundaries around all of the chaos” (*JC7*).
The flexibility was not only around the ‘mental fences’ of their juxtaposing roles, but it also pertained to physical and temporal boundaries. Regarding physical boundaries, one informant shared that her physical boundaries were flexible in that she was prepared to change clothes to go into different work contexts at a moment’s notice. Regarding temporal boundaries, another informant talked about the importance of being open to sudden shifts or jolts to their daily schedule, given that at a given moment an employee or employer could call them with a workplace emergency, requiring them to ‘put out fires’ at a moment’s notice.

I try to keep things as flexible as I can. I try to go to places that accepts walk in appointments and stuff like that. Because otherwise, I end up having to cancel a lot of things and it’s also last minute. It’s really hard to plan ahead. If there’s something that I really have to do with that time, I can always see if somebody can cover for me if something comes up. But it’s not always available. (JC7)

In doing so, go-betweens are able to more easily enter, exit, combine, and/or straddle the boundaries around their seemingly contradictory role expectations.

**Interpersonal Boundary Work: 3 Stages of Going-Between**

**Stage 1: Marker Boundary Intrusion.** Boundary intrusion, typically refers to a violation that entails “puncturing” intra-psychic boundaries of work and home (Kreiner et al., 2009) or “breaching of a physical or emotional boundary” (Katherine, 1991; p. 17). The initial stage of going between mirrors this, but consists of puncturing the physical boundary of the marker’s organization by reaching out to both the marked and the marker, and initiating a relationship. Two key boundary work tactics emerged as sensemaking and sensegiving functions for intruding into the boundary of the marker during my analysis of the data: **boundary mapping** and **value swapping**.

*Boundary Mapping* served a sensemaking function of the first stage, as it consisted of seeking to understand what characteristics demarcate the two actors. What attributes of the
employer and the job seeker kept them separated from one another? What attributes of the employee might have triggered de-valuation by markers in the workplace? In order to map the boundaries of the marked (here the job seeker), job coaches talked about trying to understand the job seeker’s unique limitations (first order code: understand job seeker challenges). For instance, one job coach noted how interacting with the public posed challenges for one of their clients and they took that into consideration when figuring out where they could work: “Or if someone comes and says ‘I hate dealing with the public. I’m okay with people. It’s not people. I just don’t like customer service. I’m okay with coworkers’.” (JC9) At the same time, informants talked about using a strengths-based approach (first order code) where they tried to understand the unique strengths of the job seeker as well. As one informant stated: “Each person is an individual and I think what I do in my approach is always a strengths-based approach...” (JC17)

Boundary mapping did not just consist of assessing the characteristics of the marked individual. The job coaches also mapped the boundaries of the marker, or non-stigmatized actor as well. They considered what characteristics of the employer hinted at the possibility that they would stigmatize, or de-value, the potential employee. To do this, the job coaches would assess the flexibility of the organization’s boundaries (first order code), as this signaled the extent to which they would be open to inviting someone into the organization with different needs and interaction styles. As one informant stated: “We need to find a place that is going to be willing to have a job coach there and train and be willing to deal with the little things that come up as they come up. Cause there are going to be little issues here and there...” (JC7). When they found that an organization’s assessed flexibility aligned with the strengths and limitations of the job seeker, the job coach would then engage in the second component of blurring the lines, value swapping.
Value Swapping. Once the go-between made sense of the boundaries limiting the integration of the relatively marked and marker in the workplace, they next needed to negotiate a fit between them so that they could be more inclined to work together. How did go-betweens do this? Value swapping served as the sensebreaking and sensegiving function of the first stage, because it consisted of pointing out weak, less valuable aspects of the typically more highly valued actor (the marker) in areas that the typically de-valued actor (the marked) had strengths or, at times, was even stronger. One way that job coaches prepared to swap values was by helping the job seeker develop work-related skills (first order code). Limitations in work-related skills were essentially very important aspects of the job seeker that could be de-valued and limit their entry into the organization. While some limitations were more difficult to develop into moderate strengths, informants often found that some of the limitations could be developed in this way. For example, many informants worked on interviewing skills and filling out applications with their job seeker. In doing so, the go-between works on elevating the worth, or value, in the eyes of potential employers.

Go-betweens engaged in further sensebreaking and sensegiving processes when they leveraged insights from boundary mapping to help employers doubt what they perceived to be their current organizational strengths. They did this by pointing out the employer weakness (first order code) and, then, pitching the job seeker’s strength (first order code). This process provided further information about how what the job seeker brought to the organization would help the organization be better than they had been without them. In doing so, the job coach obscured the marker’s pre-conceived notions about why and how they were different from the marked individual. For example, one informant, shared a story about how they used what they learned from boundary mapping about the organization’s weaknesses and the job seeker’s
strengths as a stepping stone to present the job seeker in a very positive light, and subsequently intrude the boundary of the organization.

…let’s say you go out to a Panera Bread right? You buy a bagel and stuff and you sit down and you see….You see the other dishes in there. So sometimes something is not right. You know it’s either they don’t have the right fit or they don’t have enough employees. So that’s a conversation… now if I go there at 10 o'clock obviously I’m not going to try to talk to the manager at 10 o'clock. But I might stop back around 2, 3 o'clock when I know it’s after the rush hour and it’s not that busy. I say, “Listen, I was in the store earlier and I’m just wondering, a quick question, are you guys hiring? Or what if there was a guy in the dining area? What’s going on?” And then I’ll start talking about what I do. You know, that’s a little ice breaker to bring in for the conversation of what I do and how I can possibly help business. (JC30)

Sales Work. The job coaches tended to lean more towards their business professional role in the first stage of going between (marker boundary intrusion). As highlighted in the above story about pitching job seeker strength, the job coaches approached the job seekers as a product to be placed and terms such as ‘client’ and ‘pitch’ – terms often used in sales and marketing rhetoric- were used to describe their job. Further evidence of sales work in this first stage can be gleaned through some the strategies informants used to assess organizations, namely engaging in cold calls (first order code) and knocking on doors (first order code).

So for me it’s just kind of like yesterday, I was doing some of work on the computer looking for leads, job leads. (JC 19)

But in the beginning, very much in the beginning of our program, we’re always knocking on doors. (JC6)

Overall, segmenting (i.e. separating) the two roles and aligning their mindset and behavior with the roles of a salesperson facilitated the obscuring of pre-conceived notions of difference between the two actors and subsequent intrusion into the marker’s physical boundary (the organization). In a way, using the sales work in this stage, made the marker’s boundaries more permeable. And it indirectly facilitated dimensions of localized de-stigmatization to occur.
Localized De-stigmatization Outcomes (Stage 1). By the end of a successful stage 1, the go-between facilitated changes in two dimensions of crafted value (functional and relational). First, in relation to functional value, the go-between’s work to boundary map and swap value allowed them to add value to the organization because of the employee with the stigmatized identity’s task related ability and its relevance within the workplace. Second, in relation to relational value, the go-between’s work to boundary map and swap value allowed them to initiate a marked relationship where it did not previously exist. Upon reaching these dimensions of localized de-stigmatization in the first stage, the go-between transitioned to the second stage.

Stage 2: Marked-Marker Boundary Bridging. The second stage involved not only making sense of both sides and trying to get them to make sense of each other, but also pulling them in towards each other so that they could work together effectively. This stage is characterized by the beginning of the marked relationship in organization, or the mixed contacts that Goffman (1963) emphasizes. This stage is also characterized by the go-between’s peak involvement with both actors simultaneously, thus intimate relationships being developed among the three actors. For my job coach informants, this ‘peak involvement’ meant that the job coach was at the work site with the employee with autism and their work reflected a re-working of the marked relationship boundary (i.e. redefining the typical characteristics of a relationship between the marked and the marker such as distance and inter-group anxiety). Two key boundary work tactics that serve sensemaking and sensegiving functions for bridging emerged during my analysis of the data: empathizing with the marked/marker and negotiating flexibility.

Empathizing with Marked/Marker served as a sensemaking function in the second stage. During this second stage the go-between sought access into the daily needs and desires of the employee, manager, and co-workers in the workplace. In a sense, they sought admittance into the
perspective of both the member of the stigmatized and relatively non-stigmatized group. Many informants talked about the need to empathize with all actors involved (first order code), the need in order to truly understand how to move onto re-creating the marked relationship boundary. As one informant stated, it was important to not only empathize with the needs and perspective of the marginalized, but also the needs and perspective of the dominant group members:

I think part of doing that role effectively I think is having the empathy for the employer's side as well. You dutifully see both sides. You're advocating for the client's -- that's our number one concern but certainly it's understanding it because you want the experience to go well for the employer. And if you also want to place more people there and leverage the relationship, yes, you do need to understand some of what's going on in that supervisor's world and that's where like I'll say, "Okay, how can we maybe address this issue you're having. How can we all work towards that to improve what you’re doing in this regard" so that it's better in your world and it still works for the client. (JC 17)

By empathizing with both sides from the inside of the organization and throughout the workday, the job coaches gained more depth in understanding of what other physical, temporal, and mental boundaries were flexible for both the stigmatized and the non-stigmatized, a key insight for the sensegiving function of the second stage.

Negotiating flexibility involved leveraging the insights gleaned from empathizing in order to work on parts of the marked and markers ‘fences’ that were more difficult to integrate. Data analysis suggests that job coaches did this by pairing up the inflexible (or sometimes flexible) devalued characteristics of a person that makes them different with flexible valued elements of the organization (and vice versa), the job coaches made attempts to sustain the fit that they built in the prior stage. That is, the job coaches sustained fit through flexibility by drawing upon the flexible attributes of the organizations in order to work around inflexible potentially de-valued aspects of the employee. At the same time, they drew upon the flexible attributes of the employee in order to work around the inflexible de-valuing aspects of the organizations. For
example, one job coach told a story about helping an employer learn how to better communicate with their employee with autism, thus drawing upon the flexible characteristics of the marker (willingness to learn and change their communication style) in order to meet the flexible de-valuable characteristics of the marked (willingness to change task-related work issues):

I’ve had a manager actually come to me and say ‘he’s doing a really great job but there’s this one little issues and I’ve never worked with people with disabilities before and I don’t know how to approach it with him’…So I talked her through how to talk about that with him. She already had it on file. It’s like just tell him just like you told me. It was fine. (JC7)

Often times, the inflexible de-valuing aspects of the individual or organization that needed to be addressed through the other party’s flexibility pertained to rules about the use of space and time, work procedures and routines, or the social expectations of organizational members. One way to manage fit through flexibility from my data can be seen when the job coaches built structure for employee. As an example from my data, an employee with autism did not do well with change. So when a work process changed, the job coach needed a way to help them incorporate this change. They ended up drawing upon the organization’s flexibility regarding how space could be used and they used the employee’s space to create structure (here, reminders) about the process. By changing up the physical space in order to help preserve the work routine and to accommodate the need of the employee, the previously segmented fragments of their boundaries were integrated by matching the flexibility with the inflexibility in functional ways.

**Compassion Work.** The job coaches also segmented (i.e. separated) the two roles in the second stage of going between, but this time they tended to lean more towards using their helping professional role demands. As highlighted in the above quotes about empathizing, the job coaches wanted to not only understand both actors, but they wanted both actors to understand
each other. Thus, compassion for both the marked and the marker appeared to be their tool for cementing their relationship with both actors. Compassion, defined as “suffering with” and noted as an ever-increasing element for organizational success (Dutton et al., 2014), was thus important for the job coaches to have and execute. What is more, the job coaches had to leverage what they learned from empathizing with both sides to translate the respective challenges or sufferings with the other side as they negotiated flexibility. That is, informants engaged in compassion in this second stage through *compassion building (first order code)* - first within themselves and then in order to build compassion on behalf of both actors. This kind of work was expected by them, as evidenced in some of the training manuals. Consider the following quote for example:

> …the process of discovery requires that human service professionals find ways to humanize the employment process and to minimize that distance. It is unlikely that job seekers and their families will be willing to open their lives to anyone unwilling to do the same, at least to some degree. (Training Manual)

Asking an actor to have compassion, or understand the sufferings of the other and to act with a hint of forgiveness or grace, was often done by sharing some of the ways in which the individuals felt, thought, and/or behaved.

> I was talking to him like this “…We are asked to help this fellow, to be a community member and making something out of him, whatever he can do. So can't both of us help? Give me two weeks and I want to retrain him according to you.” (JC 20)

Overall, aligning their mindset and behavior with the roles of a compassionate person facilitated the re-defining of the marked relationship in the second stage. And it indirectly facilitated dimensions of localized de-stigmatization to occur. Doing so helped both actors to see their relationship in a more positive light and it helped give them tools to sustain the relationship.

*Localized De-stigmatization Outcomes (Stage 2).* By the end of a successful stage 2, the go-between had facilitated further changes in all three dimensions of crafting value: functional, attributional, and relational. First, in relation to functional value, the go-between’s work to
negotiate flexibility allowed them to stabilize the functional value that they added in the first stage. The compassion that they built between the actors furthermore facilitated attributional value to be elevated, whereby they aided the dissipation of false beliefs associated with the label of autism. Then, relational value was worked on by the go-between’s commitment to empathizing with both parties; this allowed them to gain more insight into both parties’ perspectives. This empathy, in addition to negotiating flexibility, helped them to re-negotiate the relational boundary between the actors.

**Stage 3: Fading from Marked-Marker Boundary.** If successful in the second stage, the go-between began the third stage, which involved figuring out ways for the two actors (the marked and the marker) to be able to keep the relationship afloat with less assistance from the go-between. Moreover, it consisted of upholding and supporting the employment relationship they’ve created, but now from *outside* the boundary of their relationship. This stage is thus characterized by the go-between’s ‘fading out’ of the relational boundary that they created and cultivated in the first two stages, thus leaving the intimate involvement on the work site. The challenge with this, however, is that in the previous stage a lot of relational work involving emotion and compassion was done, allowing for the boundary that they helped to build around the marked and the marker to also subsume the go-between. Exiting out of three-party relationships, or ‘triangles’ can indeed be stressful and delicate situations to manage (Whitfield, 1993). Thus, the go-between had to be very careful in considering how to leave the relationship in such a way that the dyadic relationship between the marked and the marker could be left intact. Informants spoke about two key boundary work tactics to successfully enact this third stage: *relational boundary exit* and *distal boundary assessment.*
Relational Boundary Exit involved getting ‘unstuck’ from between the two stigmatized and non-stigmatized actors. In order to exit the relational boundary that, as a nature of their process, included themselves, the go-between engaged in sensebreaking behaviors, namely breaking expectations (first order code) and falling back (first order code). Breaking expectations consisted of changing actors’ schemas of anticipation about how often the go-between will be active and present in the relationship. This is often done through a conversation to initiate backing out. As one informant explained: “We sit down with them and say I’m not sure if you really need us anymore. Let’s try to back out a little bit...” (JC6).

Distal Boundary Assessment involved ways that the go-between ensured the maintenance of the relationship from outside of its boundaries. Through their flexibility, they made themselves readily available to employees and employers (first order code) when there was any sort of workplace emergency that required their help. For example, one informant talked about how an employee that he’d worked with called about an urgent work related manner while in the third stage: “And he called at noon. He never calls at noon. This is an emergency. So I called him back. He’s a long standing client. Of course, I’m going to respond and make sure. Those can add up. Those are unpredictable. Sometimes you get ten of those in one day” (JC 12).

But not all of the go-between’s intercessions were due to the marked or marker group members’ requests. Sometimes the go-betweens would have their own issues with letting go of the relationship, especially when they knew about changes that might threaten the stabilized value of the marked person that they had created and nurtured in the first two stages. When this happened, go-betweens secretly observed the employment relationship (first order code) without either actor knowing that they are being observed. For instance, one informant noted: “I may not be there when he chose to get to the shuttle and goes home. I'm there but he won't know it. I'm
actually hiding somewhere just watching.” (JC 28). A similar story came from the training, in which one of the job coaches told the following story of the potted plant: they had worked with an employee with autism that worked at the local mall. This particular job coach knew that the busy holiday season was approaching and was concerned that the employee might have a difficult time adjusting to the heightened amount of people in their work environment. In order to assuage their own fears, the job coach went to the mall at the beginning of the holiday shopping season and observed the employee from behind a potted plant in order to ensure that he was handling it well, and ultimately, was not engaging in any behaviors that would thwart the value that had already been added and stabilized at his workplace.

Compassionate Sales Work. Relational boundary exit and distal boundary assessment drew heavily from integrating, or blending, the helping and business professional roles and engaging in compassionate sales work. The job coaches used their psychological flexibility to straddle the role expectations within this one stage, given that it requires being compassionate to the needs of both actors and wanting to help them, but also creating emotional distance from them. Further evidence of compassionate sales work in this third stage can be gleaned through some of the strategies informants used to assess organizations, namely engaging in compassion building on behalf of the marked (first order code), compassion balancing on behalf of the marked (first order code) and elevating the professional boundary (first order code).

For one, exiting from the relational boundary often entailed compassion building on behalf of the marked (first order code) by showing the non-stigmatized actors how to help out the individual with the stigmatized identity, thereby the responsibility from themselves and more squarely unto the non-stigmatized actors’ shoulders. One example from my data shows how job coaches did this by building natural supports, or opportunities for other co-workers and
supervisors within the organization to provide the support that the job coach would support. One informant stated: “…we show them [the employer] how to do it. And many of our employers who are really good pick up on it very quickly and start to realize “I can do this”. And they start doing it. We help build this natural support” (JC 6). At the same time, go-betweens had to make sure that the non-stigmatized actors weren’t being overly-compassionate for the stigmatized actors. Several of my informants talked about the danger of this. One referred to it as “compassionate coddling “in which “…they treat you like a little child. That is what I’m seeing, that it’s more child-like and where they have to baby you. So if you happen to have somebody with compassion, it works but it’s working as coddling…” (JC 18). As a result, they often had to engage in compassion balancing (first order code), which required using behaviors associated with their business professional role.

The job coaches relied upon the business professional role behaviors by elevating the professional boundary (first order code). Not only was this indirectly exemplified by the way they fall back or break expectations as they exit the relational boundary, but it was also directly mentioned by informants and encouraged in trainings as cited below.

Employment staff are trained to maintain a purposeful distance from those who receive services so that they do not become too emotionally involved or send confusing signals regarding the limits of their relationship. (Training Manual)

Engaging in sales work by elevating professional boundary posed a challenge for some job coaches because the compassion building in previous stages made it harder to achieve the psychological flexibility between roles. As one job coach expressed, “we're still in the human business. Those are some of the meaningful things that go on” (JC17).

Localized De-stigmatization Outcomes (Stage 3). By the end of a successful third stage, the go-between had facilitated further changes in all three dimensions of crafting value:
functional, attributional, and relational. First, the go-between’s distal boundary assessment allowed the functional and attributional value that was added, stabilized, and elevated in the first two stages to be maintained from a distance. By leaving the relationship, the job coach thus gave room for the value to persist. One job coach noted the value that could be observed after leaving the relationship:

And it enriches those people’s lives and some of the things that employers tell me is that they’ve seen an increase in production just because people have more meaning in the workplace as a result of supporting someone who may never have had never before had an opportunity to have what work brings. You know we forget. We don’t appreciate the things that we’ve always had until we see someone who’s really needing it and struggling to get it and so appreciative of having it. (JC 34)

The distance that they maintained in order to achieve this sustained value furthermore suggests that the presence of a go-between in a marked relationship as a de-valuing agent is possible if they stay for too long. Similarly, in terms of relational value, the go-between’s exit out of the relational boundary helped the relational boundary to be maintained, but from a distance. Upon reaching these dimensions of localized de-stigmatization, the go-between remained in the third stage for the unforeseeable future. If there was a conflict or occurrence between the marked and marker that could pose threat to the value that had been established, the job coach would transition back into the second stage of re-pairing the relational boundary. They sometimes even terminated the relationship and started back over by mapping out another potential match for boundary intrusion.

**DISCUSSION**

*In the moment of crisis, the wise build bridges and foolish build dams* – Nigerian Proverb

Building inclusive workplaces continues to be a desired, yet perplexing, goal for organizations. By qualitatively investigating the experience of bringing dominant and marginalized people together in organizations, through the lens of autism job coaches, findings
largely support the notion that inclusion requires changes in the relational structure of an organization. Moreover, findings highlight how inclusion relies heavily on not only relationships, but also on relational work by integral actors within an organization. Findings from my study contribute in several ways to the stigma and boundary literatures.

First, findings not only offer insight into how to help marginalized persons enter and succeed in organizations; they go beyond that by shedding light on how the other side of the inclusion calculus—the individual in the position of dominance—can also be influenced to change and facilitate inclusion processes. Second, findings highlight the role of the marker, or the non-stigmatized, in facilitating inclusion through tactics that allow for localized de-stigmatization. Third, understanding go-betweens as boundary workers within organizations is especially helpful for understanding how they represent the expectations and identities of the stigmatized and non-stigmatized to each other in order to build bridges between them and improve their working relationship. Fourth, findings highlight the important role of compassion as a healing agent that organizational actors can apply in order to undo stigma in organizations. I unpack these contributions below. I also outline fruitful paths for future research on dismantling stigma in organization.

**Stigma**

While existing literature offers insights into the experiences of individuals with a stigmatized identity (e.g. disclosure, harassment, and discrimination) as well as the detrimental effects of devaluing individuals in the workplace (e.g. behaviors such as harassment and discrimination; psychological factors such as stress, satisfaction, commitment; performance), there is a paucity of research on the cognitive, behavioral, and discursive tools that could be used to undo or dismantle the frequency and intensity of stigma within workplaces. My findings
contribute by introducing the process of localized de-stigmatization and shedding light on the
cognitive, behavioral, and discursive tools that allow for this process to unfold. The model that I
put forth suggests that in order to undo de-valuation, value crafting must occur. This value
crafting relies on sensebreaking, sensegiving, and sensemaking processes and it reflects key
interpersonal mechanisms for undoing stigma and building a stronger relational structure of
inclusion. Specifically, it entails breaking through physical boundaries in the workplace that
exacerbate de-valuation, breaking down the false beliefs that other non-stigmatized individuals
have about their own value in relation to that of the stigmatized individual, and building up
bridges between individuals. The value crafting speaks specifically to the value that is taken
away or removed in the process of stigmatization and speaks to functional, attributional, and
relational dimensions of stigma.

Second, although it is well understood that stigmatization is a dynamic process that
involves multiple parties, less is understood about how stigma is dismantled in organizations,
especially from the perspective of non-stigmatized organizational members (i.e., employers or
co-workers of stigmatized individuals). Existing literature provides insight into how individuals
with stigmatized identity can manage their identity through disclosure strategies (Clair et al.,
2005; Ragins, 2008) and identity work (Ashforth & Kreiner 1999; Creed et al., 2010).
Addressing stigma in organizations through the lens of go betweens, however, contributes by
shedding light on how non-stigmatized organizational members, or markers, play an active and
integral role in either building boundaries that facilitate the maintenance of stigma or building
bridges that facilitate the dismantling of it. I thus contribute to the stigma and diversity literature
by shedding light on the non-stigmatized actors’ role in making organizational changes at the
‘ground floor’. I not only contribute by showing what is that they do to bring together different
others in the workplace, but also how they do manage this process intra-psychically through psychological flexibility. By paying attention to the experience of the “powerful” (Link & Phelan, 2001), the “wise” (Goffman, 1963), and the “go-betweens” (Jones et al., 1984), I turn attention to the importance of the work of non-stigmatized change agents in facilitating a process of making organizations more inclusive.

Third, findings contribute to literature on diversity (broadly) and the literature on stigma (specifically) by introducing the importance of compassion in resolving inequity-related issues. Defined as “suffering with” in existing literature, compassion has gained increasing attention in organizational literature (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014; Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012; Miller, Grimer, McMullen, & Vogus, 2012). Indeed within the stigma literature, examples abound of ‘suffering’ in organizations due to stigma. While existing research provides understanding of compassion and its role in organizations, less is understood about how compassion is related to diversity and inclusion in organizations. Yet a pernicious form of suffering, particularly the negative effects of stigmatization (e.g. conflict, discrimination, prejudice, micro-aggressions), has been discussed at length in extant literature (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Ragins et al., 2007). To be sure, we know that employees with visible and invisible stigmas experience discrimination and other displays of lack of support in organizations (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Moreover, at the professional level, literature suggests that certain jobs can be evaluated negatively, causing workers in these positions to have difficulty constructing an “esteem enhancing social identity” (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). While negative experiences such as this unfortunately reflect an epidemic in organizations, how might compassion serve to counter them as a healing mechanism, or a ‘cure’?

Findings from this study suggest that organizational actors can not only have compassion
for others, but that they can help build compassion in others in aims to facilitate the spread of de-stigmatization. The notion that, once deployed, compassion can weaken the intergroup demarcations that signal de-valuation offers a preliminary answer to the question about how it can serve as a healing mechanism for stigma. Indeed, informants in this study mentioned how the presence of the employee with autism and their job coach sparked new elements of compassion and other positive behaviors (e.g. helping behaviors) in other employees in the workplace. Future research that integrates stigma and the transfer of compassion across different organizational actors (and perhaps, even across organizations) would certainly contribute to our understanding of how organizational actors combatting stigma can use (and be affected by) compassion. One way to study this in future research (besides job coaches) is through social enterprises that often aim to dismantle marginalizing and stigmatizing structures in society through their products and/or employment practices. Future research engaging in semi-structured interviews and/or ethnographic tools to understand the granular processes of these organizations as well as surveys to understand how those processes are associated with outcomes such as lower perceptions of stigma over time would provide further contributive insights to this stream of research.

Unpacking the process of localized de-stigmatization and the actor of go-betweens offers several directions for future research on diversity and inclusion as well as stigma. First, understanding how go-betweens’ personality and backgrounds influence their strategies –and even their success- would generate insight into what kinds personality traits and experiences are associated with effective go-betweens. Plus, although I did not consider it here, future research might consider how the non-stigmatized individual for one particular stigmatized identity (e.g. autism), has experienced de-stigmatization due to another stigmatized identity (i.e. race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status). Perhaps the experience of being de-valued to a one
dimension of stigma helps or hinders the marker in dealing with a different dimension of stigma. Second, understanding how individuals on the other end of the go-betweens’ work (the marked and the marker) respond to the go-betweens’ strategies in each stage would be helpful to understand how their sensebreaking and sensegiving strategies are (or are not) influencing their targets’ sensemaking. Third, it would be very helpful if future research created and validated a standard measure for localized de-stigmatization to not only assess the process longitudinally in a case study, but also to shed light on how de-stigmatization is different from other relevant outcomes such as acceptance.

Fourth, this study begins to unpack de-stigmatization of a socially disruptive stigma. However, it does so to a certain extent. A handful of the job coaches indicated that they helped facilitate relationships for individuals with autism with more severe communication challenges, but existing research suggests that individuals with autism that have more severe communication problems face a unique layer of barriers to employment (McNaughton, Symons, Light, & Parsons, 2006). Scholars studying individuals with communication differences such as this note that “between 35% and 90% of time in the workplace is spent in conversation” (p. 182). Given the vast demand to use speech at work, consider that individuals with more severe communication challenges could be considered to disrupt social interaction more than those who do not. Thus paying attention to this segment of the autistic population could not only be practically relevant, but it would also provide insights into the degree of a stigma’s social disruptiveness and the associated strategies used by go-between based on the extent of social disruptiveness. Fifth and lastly, I drew upon qualitative data collection and analysis for my study; the research I have suggested here would benefit from a mix of qualitative (interviews, ethnography) work in addition to measures such as surveys or experience sample modeling to
assess personality and/or day to day reactions to the strategies that go-betweens take on.

**Boundaries**

Findings from this study also contribute to the boundary literature, particularly to the socio-cultural perspective of boundaries (Paulsen & Hernes, 2003). Boundaries are often conceptualized as the mental and/or physical fences that separate and demarcate individuals and groups. Existing management literature often refers to transitioning between boundaries associated with roles such as work and home (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). However, less is known about how individuals can make role transitions over time and across stages of their work (Kreiner et al., 2009). My study contributes to this by demonstrating how the go-betweens’ intrapersonal boundary work takes places across stages and how they manage this through psychological flexibility. The notion of psychological flexibility also contributes to the micro role transitions literature by shedding light on how integration of highly contrasting boundaries (business and helping professional roles) can occur.

Second, existing literature often pays attention to boundary work that is done within a person as they assess the multiple roles around their personal and social identities. For example, Kreiner et al. (2006) lay out a framework for understanding boundary dynamics that individuals experience, especially when they experience boundary violations, or instances when they feel that their boundaries are inappropriately close or far from one another. At the same time, extant literature in the form of self-help books discuss the use of boundaries for healthy relationships (Adams, 2005; Katherine, 1991; Whitfield, 1993). Surprisingly, even though there are self-help books about the relational perspective of boundaries, there is a dearth of research on the relational or interpersonal boundary work within management literature. Yet a lot of the desired outcomes for management scholars and practitioners rely on the kind of interpersonal boundary
work that findings from this study outline. Not only are findings applicable to inter-group relations among dominant and marginalized groups, but it also applies to any kind of interpersonal challenges in organizations (e.g. conflict, team building, trust, etc.).

Thus this study contributes to management literature by proposing the importance of relational and interpersonal boundary work in organizations. Findings about interpersonal boundary work suggest that negotiating physical space to meet the needs of different parties and using discursive strategies to change others’ conceptualizations of what is (or is not) included in one of their social categories are important features of interpersonal boundary work. Findings also suggest that actors in organizations can not only segment or integrate their own boundaries, but that they can engage in strategies to segment and integrate others’ boundaries. Moreover, the notion of fading out corroborates with existing literature on relationship boundaries and social networks (Whitfield, 1993; Jonczyk, Lee, Galunic, & Bensaou, in press) – having three people in a relationship can be psychologically and emotionally taxing. Leaving those relationships was no easy feat for the go-betweens in my study, likely due to the emotional ties that bound them in previous stages. Their use of compassionate sales work (thus intrapersonally integrating role boundaries) work perhaps offers one solution for this challenging process.

The idea of interpersonal boundary work and transitioning to different roles across stages of a person’s work offer fruitful directions for future research. For one, the intrapersonal boundary work that the go betweens experienced was in response to what could be considered a paradoxical role. Future research investigating further into the notion paradoxical roles and the boundary work that leads to virtuous or vicious cycles (Smith & Lewis, 2011) would be contributive. Second, future research would benefit from investigating further into interpersonal boundary work. In particular, the fading out stage of the model I proposed parallels what self-
help books and social network studies refer to as a very challenging process. Entering into three-actor relationships is not recommended in existing research; in fact, it is considered unhealthy. Perhaps this is why the go-betweens had such a difficult time exiting out of these relationships. Sometimes referred to as “de-triangulating”, or exiting from a relationship with three actors (Whitfield, 1993), is not recommended but is something that is often required in the ever increasingly-connected world of work. Future research could examine how important organizational actors experience this de-triangulation successfully (and unsuccessfully) through methods such as critical incident techniques and/or longitudinal studies.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I sought out to understand how individuals with relatively non-stigmatized identities in organizations could facilitate inclusion, particularly through efforts to dismantle stigma. Findings from the study contribute by shedding light on the micro-processes involved in an overlooked but important aspect of the de-stigmatization process— the meaning-giving and meaning making processes involved in the understanding of a stigma label itself. Extant research focuses on stigma as a more stagnant construct, leaving us to wonder about the process through which an organizational member’s attribute becomes devalued. Still less is known about how boundary work used by organizational ‘go-betweens’ can change or even reverse this process of devaluation. Providing insights on this front demonstrates the importance of all actors involved in dismantling stigma. Overall, Essay #1 of my dissertation highlights important meaning making and breaking processes ‘on the ground floor’ that influence the creation and sustenance of inclusivity in diverse organizations.
CHAPTER 4

ESSAY 2 – BRIDGING THROUGH BELIEF: SELECTION AND SOCIALIZATION IN IDEOLOGICALLY INFUSED ORGANIZATIONS

De-stigmatization is fundamentally a change process. Changes within organizations depend on leaders (both formal and informal) and their ability to help their colleagues make sense of what this impending change means for them. This is certainly the case for changes pertaining to diversity initiatives in organizations. To be sure, existing research highlights how framing affirmative action initiatives (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1996) and disability accommodations (Colella, 2001; Colella, Paetzold, & Belliveau, 2004) can negatively impact non-beneficiary organizational members’ perceptions of fairness within (and across) organizations. In the same way, efforts to dismantle stigma must be done effectively in order to achieve the desired outcome: others allowing their de-valued perceptions of group to be infused with value.

In this essay, I focus on the organizational processes for selecting and socializing individuals to carry out the specific mission of de-stigmatization. My inductive analysis based on multi-source data (i.e. interviews with job coaches, job coach leaders, and job coach training manuals) results in a model that illustrates (a) the importance of constructing and replenishing a reservoir of belief for newcomers to the mission (b) adaptation strategies that further replenish the reservoir of belief, encourage the embracing of the role’s paradox, and incite the person to create the future and (c) how newcomers respond to all of these adaptation strategies by building an attachment to the mission, drawing upon their past work to cope with the paradox, and begin to see themselves as- and engage behaviors that reflect- a creator. The model contributes to the stigma literature by demonstrating how dismantling stigma requires organizational efforts targeted at selecting and socializing individuals whose belief in the mission of de-stigmatization will help them to accept and manage the paradoxical role involved with effectuating such
change. Furthermore, the model contributes to literature on ideologically infused organizations by highlighting the important role that belief plays for people to adopt and adapt to strong ideological missions. It also contributes to this literature by shedding light on socialization for ideological (and not just transactional and relational) dimensions of employment’s psychological contract.

Using selection and socialization in ideologically infused organizations as a framework was not my initial intention. Themes emerged from the data that shifted my focus to this literature as it relates to stigma and de-stigmatization. In light of this, I not only review literature on de-stigmatization through the lens of change, but also literature on ideologically infused organizations and the important process of selecting and socializing individuals that can effectively push such strong organizational ideologies forward.

**BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW**

**De-stigmatization through the Lens of Change**

Dismantling or un-doing stigma requires a shift in mindset for a critical mass. Extant research offers insight into de-stigmatization processes at the level of organizations (Helms & Patterson, 2012) and professions (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2007). These studies demonstrate the use of cognitive and behavioral strategies to change public devaluation. For example, Mixed Martial Art (MMA) organizations co-opted negative labels and gained legitimacy among ‘critical audiences’ such as the media and physicians (Helms & Patterson, 2012). Other studies highlight strategies to change the marked group’s belief of their own devaluation. For example, managers associated with ‘dirty work’ occupations developed strategies to normalize the negatively evaluated work (Ashforth et al., 2007). Within the domain of diversity research, several factors have been noted that help marked employees feel less stigmatized. For instance, supportive policies, supportive and/or similarly marked colleagues,
and protective legislation allowed gay employees to perceive less discrimination and feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation (Ragins and Cornwell, 2001; Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007). It has been further noted that the most important approach to changing stigma “must ultimately address the fundamental cause of stigma….the deeply held attitudes and beliefs of powerful groups that lead to labeling, stereotyping, setting apart, devaluing, and discrimination” (Link & Phelan, 2001: 381). In other words, de-stigmatization requires change in mindset and beliefs. In order to understand how changes in mindsets and beliefs about stigmatized groups can be spurred in organizations, I take a step back and review literature on how changes in mindsets and beliefs about other issues.

**Micro-foundations of Change**

While there is less understanding about de-stigmatization within organizations, the existing literature on social movements and institutional work suggests that change – regardless of if it pertains to the a religious institutions stance on sexual orientation (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010) or consumption of products such as grass fed beef (Weber, Heinze, & DeSoucey, 2008) – requires (a) organizations that are agents of change through their mission (b) organizations that transmit their mission to its members who can help to effectuate change, and (c) a shift away from an older framework and towards a mission that involves a new, more complicated, way of perceiving the world. Consider findings from Weber et al (2008)’s where the authors inductively investigated the relationship between social movements and market creation within the specific context the of grass fed beef industry. They found that agents of change (namely, activists, ranchers, farmers, and journalists) played an integral role in enacting change due to their use of three “cultural codes”, or “binary oppositions that contain a value dimension of moral good and bad” (p. 537): authentic vs. manipulated, sustainable vs.
exploitative, and natural vs. artificial. Also consider findings from Creed, DeJordy, & Lok (2010), an inductive study that draws upon GLBT ministers in the mainline Protestant church in order to highlight the micro-processes of institutional change, namely identity work. Their key findings emphasized how ministers in their study, through a series of intra-psychic and behavioral shifts (an internalization of institutional contradictions, identity reconciliation, and then role claiming/embodied role use), challenged the existing institution’s stance on their sexual orientation and they themselves “model[ed] an alternative vision of healing and inclusion” for opponents or members of congregations (p. 1355). Together, these studies illustrate how organizations and institutions are changed through successful transmission of a mission or alternative way to view the world.

What is more, the rich body of literature on creating change also demonstrates that agents of change are crucial carriers of the mission’s message. Whether they are referred to as institutional entrepreneurs (Goodrick & Salancik, 1996; Purdy & Gray, 2005), organizational intellectuals (Zald & McCarthy, 2006, or activists (Briscoe et al., 2014), these actors are imperative because they are responsible for engaging relational and cognitive strategies and creating “repertoires of action” (Briscoe & Safford, 2008) that will in turn influence change. As noted in the case of the grass fed industry emergence in Weber et al (2008)’s work, such actors can represent “the ideology of the movement in a more coherent and pure form than more pragmatic participants at the periphery” (p. 542). If agents of change are so important to the success of a movement, how are they brought on board to adopt and accept the mission for themselves in the first place?

I integrate these questions from the micro-foundations literature with the notion of de-stigmatization because it became clear to me in early stages of data collection and analysis that I
am ultimately interested in organizations that view themselves as agents of change, change that is specifically aimed at de-stigmatization. These organizations furthermore rely on a core ideology about de-stigmatization that has been infused into the organization’s mission, and furthermore needs to be adopted and adapted by organizational members. Selection and socialization, thus, are important processes for this adoption and adaptation to take place. Thus, I briefly review the literature on ideological organizations and present my revised research questions.

Selecting and Socializing for Ideologically Infused Organizations

Ideologies can facilitate or hinder the success of an organization or a group by serving as a resource or constraint (Snow, 2008). Ideology has been defined as “a set of beliefs about how the social world operates, including ideas about what outcomes are desirable and how they can be achieved” (Ingram & Simons, 2000; p. 25) as well as “a set of values and principles infused by an organization’s history which inform and underpin its social and economic order in the present and future” (Maclean, Harvey, Sillince, & Golant, 2014). In the social movement literature, the notion of ideologies dates back to de Tracy (1797), where it was conceptualized as mobilizing beliefs and ideas that “provide the rationale for defending or challenging various social arrangements and conditions (Snow 2008; p. 496). At the same time, organizational scholars have paid increasing attention to the role that organizational ideology plays over the past three decades, in part because of the important role that ideologies have in influencing organizational behavior (Simons & Ingram, 1997). Across literatures on social movements and organizations, ideologies are thus recognized as important because they influence how organizations relate to, interact with, and depend on one another (Ingram & Simons, 2003). Furthermore, leaders have become more aware that financial compensation merely scratches the
surface when it comes to meeting the needs of employees. To drive this point home, Thompson & Bunderson (2003) refer to a statement made by CEO William George at an Academy of Management address; he stated that “the real motivation comes from believing that work has a purpose, and that they [employees] are a part of a larger effort to achieve something truly worthwhile” (p. 42). Thus, organizational ideologies not only play an influential role in driving behavior (Simons & Ingram, 1997), but they play a central role in the employment relationship itself.

Psychological contracts and social exchange theory have been used to explain the power of ideology in the employer-employee relationship (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Whereas psychological contracts have been known to exchange ‘relational’, or socioemotional, as well as ‘transactional’ currencies, Thompson & Bunderson (2003) argue that the ideological dimension of the psychological contract reflects what Blau (1964) refers to as ‘ideological rewards’ in which the relationship is founded upon “an alternative inducement: the pursuit of a cause”. Thus, the ‘currency’ exchanged in ideologically-infused organization is said to have utility for a person because it is intrinsically rewarding. I reference and review the literature on selection and role socialization to get a better understanding of how organizations might socialize members in general to understand their roles in an ideologically infused organization.

Understanding how new organizational members learn and adapt to social norms and rules within organizations in general has received much attention over the last century. It is well accepted within this literature that identity and behavior changes occur as people exit and enter new roles (Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978; Sutton, 1991; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). For instance, in her study of professional transitioning to more senior roles, Ibarra (1999) found that individuals adapted to new roles by experimenting with provisional selves. Also, in his study on
bill collectors, Sutton (1991) found that employees used different ‘display rules’ to handle the organizations norms around emotional labor. The existing research on role adaptation and transition also proposes that identity narratives of people as they transition should be particularly helpful, given that identity narratives say so much about the narrator (Ibarra & Barbulescu).

While this literature sheds light on the importance of understanding newcomers’ experiences and challenges of adapting to new roles, there is less focus on organizations and their leaders’ strategies for getting newcomers to adopt and adapt to strong ideological missions. There is also little understanding about how individuals make sense of such missions that they are being socialized to adopt. At the same time, there is a dearth of research focusing on how leaders select and socialize organizational members that are able to facilitate de-stigmatization in organizations, even though the call for inclusive workplaces (an end goal that would in part require such de-stigmatization) persists. My revised research questions are thus as follows:

1. What do leaders look for when selecting change agents for a mission with strong ideologies? 
2. How do leaders socialize change agents to manage the mission? 
3. How do change agents react to these socialization tactics and make sense of the mission?

**CONTEXT**

Similar to Essay #1, I chose to stay within the context of job coaches for individuals with autism for Essay #2. For more information about autism and employment, as well as the rising importance of job coaches, please see Essay #1.

**Relevance of Context for Essay 2**

Curiously, although their jobs are incredibly important, job coach informants from my preliminary analysis spoke to a structure that, through selection and incentive practices, does not align with the often-communicated salience of their role. For example, many informants spoke
to lower education requirements for job coaches and the minimal training that job coaches often need to become certified for this important position. Also, in terms of training, informants referenced the need for not only more training, but also better content in the training, namely training that includes autism-specific information for the job coach. When this lack of training and low incentives co-occur, informants noted that they noticed that job coaches were harder to retain, making the autistic client’s employment attainment and retention even more difficult. Thus, attracting, socializing and retaining the right job coach continues to be an important topic in the broader movement’s conversation. To be sure, an agency report (WISE Annual Report, p. 14), outlined programs for professionals in the field to network and share strategies for attracting and retaining “the BEST people to this field”. In addition, the ODEP published a document about core competencies for employment specialists that assist with customized employment, stating that:

Due to job seeker complexities, identifying and coordinating an optimal fit between the job seeker, the job tasks, the supporting environment, and the employer requires that persons providing CE services see things from a different vantage point than those typical of VR personnel or SE job developers. (ODEP website, Customized Employment Competency Model Document; p. 1)

Agency leaders’ perspectives on – and job coaches’ responses to – selecting and socialization tactics will provide fertile ground in Essay #2 for gaining understanding about recruitment and socialization for an ideologically infused organizational mission, particularly one involving de-stigmatization.

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4 While I am of course interested in making a theoretical contribution, the context of this work presents an opportunity to also make a significant and relevant practical contribution to job coaches working with individuals with disabilities. Thus, I will include questions in my interview protocol about how the job coaches feel their field could improve. My hope is to be able to use responses about their experiences in order to make recommendations for job coach agency directors and other levels of management.
METHODS

I engaged in field and archival qualitative data collection and analysis for Essay #2. This method of data collection and analysis suits the study because it involves “open ended inquiry about a phenomenon of interest” that is not fully theoretically addressed through existing literature (Edmondson & McManus, 2007: p. 1161). That is, although stigma and socialization have been studied in the past, selecting and socializing change agents for missions based on de-stigmatization is not fully addressed in the organizational literature. I used grounded theory as my qualitative approach in order to investigate how organizational actors created and made sense of selection and socialization efforts for a mission aimed towards de-stigmatization.

Grounded theory is an appropriate approach for inductive (or abductive; Reichertz, 2010) theory development (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as it entails the collection and analysis of data in order to construct theories that are “grounded”—and emerging from-the data themselves (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Below I outline the steps I took to engage in data collection and analysis. It is important to note that, given the iterative nature of grounded theory methodology, I did my best to stay open to emerging constructs and revising my interview protocol and questions as the process unfolded and insights were gleaned.

Data Collection

In Essay #2, I was on the one hand interested in understanding the ways that organizational leaders facilitated de-stigmatization though their selection and socialization strategies. To understand this, I used semi-structured interviews with leaders of agencies that were responsible for doing just that. In order to gain entry into agencies that employed job coaches, I emailed agencies listed on Office of Vocational Rehabilitation websites across states that have been listed in the first, second, third, and fourth quartile of the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Case for Inclusion list. UCP is an organization with a mission to “educate, advocate, and
provide support services through an affiliate network to ensure a life without limits for people with a spectrum of disabilities” (Case for Inclusion, p. 3). I began to reference this list because (a) I wanted to speak to agencies affected by different opportunity structures for their mission to advance in and (b) individuals in the supported/competitive employment movement often referenced this list as an important indicator of how well their job coaches and agencies are doing with changing employment opportunities for individuals with autism and related disabilities.

Questions from the protocol concerning my research question included: “What characteristics would you say make a good job coach? How do you go about finding people like this? Do your job coaches receive training? If so, what kind of training do your job coaches receive?” The interviews were held over the phone or in person, depending on my and the informant’s availability. In the end, I spoke with 18 job coach leaders (11 of which had job coaching experience) across 8 states (Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Washington) and interviews lasted an average of approximately one hour.

At the same time, I was also interested in how job coaches made sense of their role, in particular their entrance and socialization experiences. I used semi-structured interviews with job coaches to understand this. Questions from the protocol that addressed this included: “What led you to become a job coach? What kind of training did you receive? How would you describe your role?” (see Appendix A, Table 3 for the evolution of protocols) These interviews were also held over the phone or in person depending on availability. Overall, I spoke with 36 job coaches across the same 8 states about their experiences. 11 of those job coaches are now leaders but also spoke to their experiences as a job coach. Interviews with the job coaches lasted an average
of approximately one hour. In addition to agency leaders and job coaches, I collected data through two of the most widely cited training manuals for the job coaches and leaders that I spoke to. I was also able to draw upon my participant observation of job coach training and reflect upon the training’s influence on my perspectives about the broader mission. I also spoke to 10 agency leaders that were not job coach leaders or job coaches, but could speak to the importance of job coaches and the ways they are selected and socialized. All of the interviews were recorded and professionally transcribed. Lastly, I drew upon secondary data such as national and state websites associated with the broader Employment First movement, books, and legislation concerning supported and customized employment.

Data Analysis

The coding process used in Essay #1 was used for Essay #2. In the interest of brevity, I do not repeat the analytical process, but I highlight how I analyzed data from a data source that is now primary in Essay #2: training manuals. I used a similar coding process for the data surrounding socialization that came from the training manuals, but I created and developed a separate dictionary for those themes.

FINDINGS

Overview

Overall, findings suggest the importance of building and replenishing a ‘reservoir of belief’, or a cognitive supply and behavioral proof of conviction in the importance and success of the organization’s mission. The reservoir of belief was not only selected for, but also continuously developed and replenished through socialization. Socialization consists of ‘role calls’, or sensegiving behaviors of inviting the newcomer to see and enact their role in a certain way. Importantly, socialization also consisted of the newcomers’ response to such calls, what I call ‘role responses’. This process represented through Figure 2 in Appendix B and illustrative
quotes for the major themes are provided in Table 5 in Appendix A. When I provide quotes below, the informants’ personal identification has been removed and replaced with pseudonyms. The pseudonyms can be interpreted as acronyms (JCL stands for ‘job coach leader’; JC stands for ‘job coach’; AL stands for ‘agency leader’) followed by randomized numbers associated with informants.

Selecting for a ‘Reservoir of Belief’

The belief of a change agent can impact the way they frame and sell issues within an organization (Sonenshein, 2016). A predominant theme in my data collection from job coach leaders and agency leaders was that, when searching for job coaches, the most important quality that they searched for was a ‘reservoir of belief’, which I define as a cognitive supply and behavioral proof of conviction in the mission’s importance and success. According to my informants, the environment that the prospective job coach would be entering into presented so many challenges, that many leaders needed to observe that the prospect would endure in situations that many would give up on. Besides belief itself, they shared that they needed to see two additional components in the prospective job coaches’ reservoir (persistence and the potential for creative problem solving) in order to feel confident that they could not only succeed at creating employment opportunities for individuals with autism and related disabilities, but also that they could be retained to do so over the long term. Consider the following quote by one of the job coach leaders:

I mean I look for people who -- the only thing that I don’t think I can teach people is that they have to believe. They have to believe in the employability of somebody with the disability. If they believe, I can train everything else. (JCL11)

But what does belief look like behaviorally? Some leaders characterized it behaviorally by persistence in some of the most difficult times. They also shared that, the potential to exhibit
creative problem solving, or coming up with creative solutions in the midst of challenges during the selection process, was another sign that a person had a strong reservoir of belief.

These people possess that and they have the willingness and desire to learn all the technical skills that are needed for you know, meeting with employers or doing jobs site analysis or environmental analysis or the teaching techniques for breaking down tasks and getting somebody on boarded into a business environment. Those skills are readily available to be learned and mentored and those sorts of things in our state. (JCL14)

How did leaders screen for belief? Leaders used many informal strategies to assess whether the job coach had a strong enough reservoir of belief to be successful. One leader shared that she took the prospective job coach on ‘ride-alongs’ with her to different sites for a day in order to give them a more realistic job preview and, at the end of the day, she would ask them “so, do you still want to do this?”. Another leader noted a similar strategy, but instead of taking them on a ride along, he would verbally describe all of the most challenging parts of the job:

When I select my staff, it’s all just an interview process and my interview process isn’t very much. I don’t want you to take this job, tell me why. I want you to tell me why you still want it if I tell you everything bad about it. I mean it really is, I’m going to tell you how hard it is, I’m going to tell you how long the hours are, I’m going to tell you how low the pay is, I’m going to tell you that people with autism are wonderful people. I said, but sometimes you’ll wreck your brain trying to figure how to solve a problem so that you can teach them and then you’d come to find out what’s the easiest thing in the world to do when someone else walks and then sees the solution. So it’s all this kind of stuff that goes on. (JCL6)

Selecting for the reservoir of relief, while an important first step to mobilizing individuals to take on the mission of the movement, was not sufficient. Sensegiving activities in the form of socialization, or ‘role calls’ as I call them, were needed to help fuel (a) subsequent sensemaking responses by newcomer and (b)replenishing of the reservoir of belief. Thus the reservoir of belief was important because it became the driving force behind the rest of the strategies used to onboard individuals in an ideologically infused organization. I next further unpack the ways that
ideologically-infused organizations socialized newcomers across three stages of ‘role calls’ and subsequent ‘role responses’.

**Socializing for a ‘Reservoir of Belief’: ‘Role Calls’ and ‘Role Responses’**

Once they selected individuals with a strong reservoir of belief, training and socialization included ‘role calls’, or sensegiving activities that invited the job coach to construct and enact a role aligned with the ideologically infused mission. I noticed three role calls in the data: to *remember the mission*, *embrace paradox*, and *create the future*. All of these activities required job coaches to build upon their belief, and invited them to re-frame and re-focus their values and responsibilities. In addition, the role calls provided cognitive and behavioral tools that would help the coaches to become more comfortable with adopting and adapting to the mission of the broader Employment First movement. Each role call was associated with a ‘role response’, or the sensemaking activity that the job coach uses to answer the call/invitation to construct/enact the role. I noticed three role responses: *transcending the job*, *drawing on past selves*, and *creatively crafting*. Together, the role calls, followed by the job coaches’ role responses, helped job coaches to continuously replenish the very reservoir of belief that they were selected for having.

**Role Call 1: Remember the Mission.** The first role call to *remember the mission* consists of instances in the training materials where newcomers were asked to assess their own values and philosophy about employment for individuals with disabilities. Evidence of its importance can be gleaned from a chapter of one of the training manuals. In this chapter, the authors urged organizational leaders to be clear on – and push- the message as much as possible.

> Although the symbolic image of leadership and management is always critical to any change or realignment process, the most critical aspect at this point is the message (Training Manual)
Thus, as a critical and foundational part of socialization, newcomers were given scenarios and asked to make judgments about which solutions would fit into the mission of the broader movement. The training also posed questions based on whether or not the newcomer could see themselves as a proponent of the movement’s mission by example, asking the extent to which they can explain it to friends and other people outside of their workplace environment.

But really, what is supported employment? What do you say when an employer asks you what you do? For that matter, what do you say when your friends ask you what you do? What do values have to do with the implementation of supported employment?

You ask yourself, competitive employment or center-based program? I'm going to leave you with that because your first choice should be competitive employment if you are a strong proponent of supported employment.

Further evidence of its central role in socialization came from my own job coach training. The first lesson in the training was more about the values and philosophy of employment first as well as appropriate language to be used to underscore the values and philosophy than it was about the actual tasks or stages necessary for a job coach.

This seemingly minor decision to focus on the mission first speaks volumes about what was prioritized by organizational leaders during this socialization process. Doing so incited a transcendental experience, where the person’s purpose is not only to be job coach, but to effectuate an important change with urgency. Instead of addressing how the person fits into the profession of a job coach, the socialization prioritizes how the person aligns with the belief and the values of the broader social movement mission. Due to its central role in the process, the call to remember the mission re-surfaces alongside the subsequent role calls, almost serving as reasoning or logic behind why those role calls are also valid.

**Role Response 1: Transcending the Job.** The job coaches responded to this mission-focused role call by in fact *transcending the job*. That is, job coaches responded by referring to being a part of something that is bigger than them or what they need or want in life. For instance,
several job coaches, like the one cited below, shared that they definitely were not doing the job because of the money.

Well, the job is tough but we're basically not doing the job for the money because the money sucks. It's a not for profit. I find social services overall it's kind of like we play a key role in society but the society doesn’t put that dollar figure to say at how we effectively change lives but we do it for the heart felt.. that we're having an impact on in individual's lives. (JC17)

As one informant noted, transcending the job meant that, on top of not being concerned with the money, there was an emotional and even spiritual attachment to their role. According to them, doing the job was about having an impact on other peoples’ lives (JC16).

Alongside the diminishing importance of the financial incentives and intensified importance of the emotional fulfillment, informants transcended the job by way of framing it as a calling. In doing so, they responded to the call of the mission by feeling that their purpose on earth was to answer this call and to personally take on the mission. Take, for example, an informant that stated the following: “Mine is a mission, so I try to accomplish as much as I can. My joy is to see my customers are helped the way they need to be helped. (JC19). Together, the role call to remember the mission alongside the role response of transcending the job only further replenished the reservoir of belief, making the informants’ dedication to and conviction in the possibility of the mission even stronger. For instance, informants shared that they saw themselves as stronger advocates for the mission, advocates whose behavior demonstrated persistence and belief in the possibility that the landscape of employment would indeed change for individuals with autism and related disabilities.

**Role Call 2: Embrace Paradox.** The second roll call was to embrace the paradox that was frequently associated with the role of de-stigmatizing. Data collection from multiple secondary sources, including advocacy agency websites, alongside primary resources such as training manuals and job coach interviews revealed several paradoxical tensions in the job coaches’ role,
tensions that had cascaded down from a broader movement’s (Employment First) mission and ideals. Data analysis suggested that the paradox of their role was a culmination of juxtaposing (a) stakeholders and (b) values regarding dependence on the system. Below I describe each of the paradoxical tensions in more detail, providing quotes as evidence for their existence as well as the ways that training, in a seemingly nonchalant fashion, merged the opposing ideals together in explaining what job coaches were expected to do.

First, informants were asked to embrace the paradox related to the work of de-stigmatization that requires them to deal with multiple (and at times, conflicting) stakeholders. This is evidenced by rhetoric on advocacy group websites as well as statements by job coaches, job coach leaders, and agency leaders during their interviews. Sources used for training cited the importance of realizing that there are multiple ‘clients’ or ‘customers’: the person with a disability and the employer.

You have two customers if you run a supported employment program: the first customer is the individual with a disability, the second customer is business. You make both those customers happy, you've got a high-quality program. (Job Coach Training)

Remember there are basically two customers in any good supported employment program: the first is the individual client who you are working with as a partner to try and help develop a career path. That might be the most simplistic job in the world out in the labor force or it might be the greatest job in the world; but your first customer is that individual client. You have a second customer as well. If you don’t keep that customer happy, you are going to have real problems, and that is the business that is doing the hiring. Businesses talk. You want to use businesses to help create new jobs, help create portfolios of recommendations for people, and help with business advisory boards. (Job Coach Training)

Second, informants were asked to embrace the paradox associated with the work of de-stigmatization that touts the importance of both dependence and independence. Specifically, job coaches were socialized to engage in work that promoted both ideals, ideals that seem to be juxtaposing but have been touched upon in existing research as commonly opposing ideals that
individuals need to manage in stigmatized contexts (Gamson, 1992; Klandermans, 2008).

Within this particular context, it is evidenced by rhetoric on advocacy group websites as well as informants about the high value of both of these elements in the Employment First movement.

On the one hand, sources pushed for others to believe that individuals with autism and related disabilities could live independent adult lives instead of being dependent on parents or publically funded services. Consider the following quote from an APSE fact sheet:

As with all young people, investment in young people with disabilities to properly prepare them for adult lives characterized by maximum independence and self-sufficiency, benefits both the individual and society by helping to ensure that individuals are not highly dependent on publicly funded services and programs throughout their adult lives. (APSE website, APSE Fact Sheet: Transition)

At the same time, sources pushed for the notion of ‘ongoing supports’, a term in the supported employment world that is characterized by having employment specialists or job coaches throughout a person’s career. The ongoing supports reflect a reliance or dependence – but on a different kind of publically funded service- and juxtapose the value of independence. For example, the APSE website states the following about supports:

As with all other individuals, employees with disabilities require assistance and support to ensure job success and should have access to those supports necessary to succeed in the workplace (APSE website)

Training materials, thus, suggested that newcomers embrace this paradox by merging the two ideals by referring to doing both within the same block of text.

Using natural supports, which has been the more contemporary approach, looks at the utilization of coworkers and employer assistance programs that the company may have. It really draws heavily on the employment specialist, or job coach, as a consultant to help arrange things in the environment so that the person does not become dependent on that type of job coach help.

Identifying, selecting and facilitating supports that promote independence and employment stability is a complex task with multiple factors that must be considered.
Another way that the socialization suggested that newcomers embrace the paradox associated with their job was by envisioning a superordinate role. According to them, doing so should help the job coach merge the seemingly juxtaposing associated with having multiple stakeholders and facilitating dependence/independence. Here, they merge the two into the role of an employment service agency/agent – a role that draws upon both business professions and human service professionals. As noted in the quote below (and in the table in the Appendix), envisioning the superordinate role required that job coaches experienced a paradigm shift from what they may have previously understood the role to entail.

Supported employment service providers must not view themselves as human service providers, but rather as employment service agencies. This is a significant paradigm shift for many supported employment organizations that emphasizes a competitive and valued offering of needed services to employers. (Job Coach Training)

**Role Response 2: Drawing on Past Selves**

Having the paradigm shift opened informants up so that they could embrace the paradox associated with their role; this became especially useful for the job coaches when they had to make sense of the juxtaposing ideals and stakeholders. Job coaches responded to the overall call to embrace paradox by *drawing on their past selves*, or referring to (and often merging) instances in their personal or professional history that provided repertoires for facilitating dependence and independence or handling the interests and needs of multiple stakeholders. For instance, one coach said that “…our job is somewhat unique in that way that there's probably five or six skill sets that you draw upon, that you share from businesses as well as human behavior” (JC16).

One way that job coaches drew on their past selves was by talking about their past desires to help others or their past work in the business sector. For instance, one job coach noted the following: “I really like to do job coaching. I mean I’ve always liked helping people especially people that really need it and appreciate it” (JC8). Similarly, another job coach noted their
tendency to like to help people: “I had a great, what you call, love for people; therefore, I easily attach myself to the customers” (JC20). At the same time, informants discussed a work background in both helping and business types of professions:

Well, it does help that I've managed, in every job that I've had prior to this, I've managed. ...Yeah. Whether it was ten years of floor covering, whether it was, I went to college for a while but ten years of floor covering. I ran different organizations with churches and things of that nature, youth groups, soup kitchens, fund raisers, and all my job in the management. So nursing homes, I worked at a day care for a while, just different little age groups of that nature. So I had like the whole human experience, like every experience with all different ages and different groups of people you could ever run into. (JC28)

Informants thus were able to make sense of their superordinate role by drawing upon instances of helping and/or serving in more business related professions in the past. Past experience in both thus gave them insight into repertoires for both sides of the paradoxes that confronted them. Having a business background equipped them with tools to handle the distancing needed in promoting independence and discussing business needs with one group of stakeholders – the managers of organizations. Having a human services background (or one in which they were required to care for others’ well-being) equipped them with tools to handle the closeness required to provide supports (and facilitate dependence) and to effectively respond to the unique needs, talents, and abilities of their other stakeholder- the employees with autism.

Together, the role call to embrace paradox alongside the role response of drawing on past selves was underscored by the steadily replenishing reservoir of belief. This belief, as stated earlier, created an underlying rationale as to why embracing paradox was not only necessary, but possible, making the informants’ dedication to and conviction in the possibility to effectively respond to the role call even stronger.

**Role Call 3: Create the Future.** The third role call, create the future, consistently invited job coaches to behaviorally execute upon their reservoir of belief by committing to the task of
creating a future based on limitless possibilities. This meant that not only were they invited to be creative in their decision making and problem solving, but they were invited to create. Evidence of this role call is provided through the following quote from job coach training: “Providing quality supported employment services requires technical and interpersonal skills applied creatively and flexibly.” As demonstrated here, the notion of flexibility was often included in these invitations to be creative and to create, implying that engaging in creation required unbounded and futuristic thinking. But what were the being called to create and what did this flexibility entail from cognitive and behavioral perspectives?

Approaching their work as ‘creators’ meant that informants should create new futures based on their core belief (which aligned with the mission of the movement). Given that their work involved the employability of individuals with autism and related disabilities – individuals with stigmatized identities – my informants were ultimately expected to create value for individuals who were largely de-valued or under-valued in their communities. And they were expected to use employment, including the creation of jobs, to facilitate this value. One way to go about this was through job carving, or “the process of analyzing the duties performed in a given job, or the duties of several different jobs, to identify discrete tasks that could be combined to create a job that meets specific aspirations and support needs of an individual while meeting the needs of the business” (Griffin et al; p. 120). Job carving is similar to job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) in that it relies on being creative in the process. What’s more, this notion of job carving or job crafting was used as a means to be a creator of something greater (value). As indicated by the training manual by Griffin and colleagues, “further, job carving allows an individual to maximize contribution, something that should be at the heart of any job search or creation effort….” (Training manual).
As previously discussed, being flexible or adaptive when it came to time and ideals was commonly mentioned in training materials. Specifically, job coaches were called to think differently about time by having futuristic mindsets. They were also called to have a mindset of limitless possibilities, or to abandon idealistic boundaries about what the future could hold.

Consider the following quotes from one of the training manuals:

In short, scarcity thinkers are dependent on those people and systems they view as more powerful than themselves and often use these entities as their excuse for not making progress. Abundance thinkers, on the other hand, create the future and recognize the world as having limitless possibilities (Training manual)

When conducting a job analysis and carving the job…attention should be given to discrete tasks that match existing competencies and attributes and those that a person is likely to be able to learn. This allows the creation of jobs that are more appropriately challenging, maintain interest, and allow the person room for personal and career development. (Training manual)

**Role Response 3: Creatively Crafting.** The informants responded to the call to create the future by *creatively crafting*, or negotiating what is by keeping in mind a notion of limitless possibilities for what could be in the future. Job coaches, for one, noted that in order to do their job, they needed to be creative.

I mean I feel I was just complaining yesterday that I’ve been trying to do good and do the right thing and man it’s been fighting me lately, but you know what, you’ve got to keep doing that and then create the programs that you want to see, create the environments that you want to see. I don’t know what else to do, but you’ve got to work for the best with what you’ve got. (JC16)

On top of being creative, job coaches saw that, behaviorally, a dominant part of their job was indeed to create. But they noted that they did this by leveraging the materials already existing in the workplace to create structure or whatever else they could foresee the individual needing in the future. As an example, one informant stated: “And then once they’re on the job, if structure is needed, you know, creating that structure or whatever is needed for them in the job” (JC8).
Having the mindset of flexibility in order to pursue the superordinate goal of ‘creator’ became especially useful for the job coaches when it came to consider future possibilities or needs of the individual with autism, such as needs for managing space, their task, and/or time in order to help them get and keep employment. Coaches that had these particular trainings noted the that they were able to use this flexibility as they went in to create jobs by using materials like brochures and paying attention to the needs that were being expressed by employers in the moment in order to come up with creative responses. For instance, one coach stated the following:

We did have a brochure. I have 2 different types of brochures. I have 1 for the intern program which is just what we have been talking and then I have one at the transition to customize influence. I would talk a little bit about the internship but more the goal of customized employment and can I offer my time to fully come out? Let me meet with you? Let me walk around with you a little bit and showing the things that you are thinking of and I'll point out to things that I see that I can help you with. Together, we'll come up with things that we can do. That's great. At some time it's just like get in there and we start doing something really basic and I look around and I'm like you know what, once we get in there and we kind of compromise, we could help you with that or can I try this today and once you're comfortable, a lot of places you can try just about anything. It's nice because it means just you don't know until you get in there. (JC25)

Together, and similar to the second set of role calls and responses, the role call to create the future alongside the role response of creatively crafting was underscored by the steadily replenishing reservoir of belief. This belief, as stated earlier, created an underlying rationale as to why creating the future was not only necessary, but possible. Additionally, the behavior of creatively crafting across different organizations became a mechanism for carrying the mission into other organizations, giving the mission the proverbial feet needed in order for others to pick it up and, potentially, adopt and adapt to it.
DISCUSSION

For Essay #2, I originally set out to understand how de-stigmatization is facilitated through organizational selection and socialization. My preliminary data analysis hinted at the idea that (a) the organizations that I was studying were ideologically infused and armed with the mission of de-stigmatization and (b) selection and socialization were key instruments for transmitting the mission to newcomers. The findings that emerged spoke to the central role of constructing and replenishing a reservoir of belief for newcomers entering into ideologically infused organizations with a particular goal to engage in removing taint, or de-stigmatizing, a group of marginalized individuals through employment. Findings furthermore contributed to literature and existing research on de-stigmatization in organizations and ideologically infused organizations in several ways.

First, findings contribute to the stigma literature by highlighting organizational processes of selection and socialization that can facilitate further de-stigmatization through transmission of a mission. Second, findings contribute by shedding light on the important mechanism of the reservoir of belief among individuals who are on the forefront of inciting change in organizations, particularly change having to do with de-stigmatization. Third, findings contribute by highlighting how socialization can occur for the ideological, not just the transactional and relational, dimensions of psychological contracts that occur in employment relationships. I provide further detail of these contributions below as well as directions for future research.

De-stigmatization thru the Lens of Change

Recruiting and socializing change agents to participate in inclusionary practices, particularly that of de-stigmatization, within organizations is not well understood in existing
management literature. Findings from my model contribute to this literature in three important ways, namely by shedding light on belief and its role in sensegiving and sensemaking about one’s role to facilitate de-stigmatization; the need to sensegive about the paradox that will ensue when attempting de-stigmatization efforts; and the need to sensegive and sensemake about creating a future that does not exist by seeing boundless or limitless possibilities. I provide more detail about these contributions below.

First, belief emerged as an important mechanism in the process of mobilizing change agents for the cause of de-stigmatization. The intersection of micro-mobilization and stigma literature suggests the importance of change agents to have the ability to manage their (often times stigmatized) identities as they engage in their work. Often times these identities that they manage revolve around and receive energy from a belief system (Simons & Ingram, 1997). Yet, less is known about how organizations can select for individuals with that belief. Findings from my study suggest that this is gleaned through the change agents’ persistence to do the work even after they receive a realistic job preview. This finding corroborates with findings from Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate (under review) about managing workers in tainted professions. The authors found that several managers provided a realistic job preview so as to not hide the challenges associated with the job from the potential newcomer. Not only do organizations need to select for organizations with this belief system, but my findings suggest that they also need to facilitate its replenishing over time. This may perhaps be because of the depleting cognitive and emotional resources associated with expressing opinions and ideals that are different from others in their environment.

Second, findings from Essay #2 shed light on the paradox associated with the work of de-stigmatization and strategies for socializing individuals to prepare for such paradox. Paradox has
been defined as “contradictory yet inter-related elements...that seem logical in isolation but absurd and irrational when appearing simultaneously” (Lewis, 2000; p. 760). Other defining characteristics of paradox is that it is not only dynamic but also that it “persists over time” (Smith & Lewis, 2011; p.381). Questions of paradox within organizations, as illustrated in existing literature, are “why do formal procedures aimed at assuring fair treatment of employees often trigger claims of injustice” (e.g. Sitkin & Bies, 1993; c.f. Lewis, 2011; p. 2000) and “how do actors become integral members of a group and retain their individuality? (e.g. Amason, 1996; Smith & Berg, 1987; c.f. Lewis, 2000; p. 769).

Findings from the current study in particular spoke to the paradox of independence and dependence; in institutions where an individual’s value has been discredited, oftentimes societal systems express this through infantilization (Jones et al., 1984), and subsequently create systems that facilitate dependence. That dependence, however, becomes the very thing that perpetuates the person’s lesser value in the eyes of others in society. Those institutional mindsets, in turn, are often implicitly communicated to society through cultural norms. Thus changing those institutional mindsets within organizations seemed to be a pressing concern for the organizations in this study who desired to infuse value where it has been diminished. As a result, they called the newcomer to embrace and manage the paradox associated with providing the help and support that the person indeed needed while, at the same time, demonstrate to others in their work environment (and to the person) that they can be independent in several ways. Furthermore, my findings suggest that discussing the paradox upfront and encouraging newcomers to embrace it could trigger sensemaking processes in which newcomers begin to piece together aspects of their past selves to build repertoires to draw upon so that they can indeed embrace the paradox.
Third, findings shed light on the important role of socializing individuals to create and to be creative in order to solve the problem of stigmatization in organizations. Stigmatization is indeed a ‘sticky’ process that, over time, perpetuates seamlessly. As a result of this constant perpetuation, undoing stigma requires individuals to think outside of the familiar boxes that have been so deeply ingrained, yet allow for stigmatization to perpetuate. Findings from my study demonstrate that engaging in role calls that trigger the need to create a future facilitate this process.

**Ideologically Infused Organizations**

Recruiting and socializing individuals into ideologically-infused organizations has been discussed in existing management research through discussions of homogeneity (Rothschild & Whitt, 1986; c.f. Simons & Ingram 1997), ideological currency and contracts (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003), and ideological competition (Ingram & Simons, 2000). Still, the ways in which the ideological dimension of psychological contracts are created and maintained by organizations warrants further understanding. Findings from my model contribute to this literature in three important ways, namely by shedding light on how organizations can craft the very belief system that they need newcomers to buy into through selection and socialization; the need to sensegive about the paradox that will ensue when engaging in an important cause due to the need to reconcile contradictions between the past and the future; and the potential for individuals to be critical conduits of diffusing ideologies outside of organizations and across different layers of society. I provide more detail about these contributions below.

First, seeking and continuously replenishing the reservoir of belief played a central role in prepping individuals entering into ideologically infused organizations. Although not frequently used to understand organizations, ideologies are a central driving force of organizational
behavior (Simons & Ingram, 1997). They not only impact decision that individuals make, but these decisions “reflect a belief system molded by interactions between the individual’s subjectivity and the relevant organizational, societal, and cultural systems” (p. 784). Even less is known about how this belief system is constructed and upheld by organization and their members. Findings from this study suggest that role calls and role responses, anchored by the call to remember the mission and the response to transcend a job, allowed for the belief system to come to emerge and be sustained.

This essay also contributes to the ideologically infused organization literature by nodding to the importance of identity and, more specifically, identity work or a range of activities that involve forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening, or revising the constructions that allow for a coherent and desirable self-concept (Snow & Anderson, 1987; Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). Identity work can include projection of unwanted selves (Petriglieri & Stein, 2012) as well as workspaces (i.e. physical, social, and/or psychological spaces that serve as holding environments that “reduce disturbing affect and facilitates sensemaking”; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010; p. 50). Moreover, identity work has been used to understand stigmatized groups. For example, Creed, DeJordy, & Lok (2010) suggest that their findings about the identity work enacted by the GLBT ministers in their study is indeed a type of institutional work. Plus, in their conceptualization and empirical study on individuals doing dirty work, Ashforth and colleagues (1999; 2007) highlight the identity work associated with avoiding taint in one’s profession.

Indeed, the identity work literature is relevant to the notion of change because existing identity work literature demonstrates that people use identity work tactics especially when they are making transitions, demonstrating identity work of individuals entering into new professional
roles (Ibarra, 1999); priests as they find balance between personal and social identities (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006); and homeless and LGBT people as they balance others’ perceptions of stigma and devaluation with how they perceive themselves (Snow & Anderson, 1987; Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010). As indicated in findings from this study, identity work may serve as yet another way to facilitate change, especially in ideologically infused organizations. According to Scully and Creed (2005) “the construction of social identity is critical to a range of social movements” (p.312) because successfully constructing and legitimating a social identity should allow for better mobilization. And in line with social movement theory, social movements require an identification of the “we” versus the “they” (Scully and Creed, 2005). Why is this the case? For one, having a identity associated with a cause or mission allows individuals to define themselves as they relate like minded others in terms of values and beliefs (Melucci., 1995) In addition, the social identity allows change agents to know their role, thus what issues to address and contest as they attempt to enact changes in their environment. Yet, less is understood about the onboarding of change agents into organizations with strong ideologies and how that might be facilitated by identity work. This study thus contributes to the literature on ideologically-infused organizations by introducing the notion of ‘role calls’ and ‘role responses’, two types of processes that could facilitate the identity construction process of change agents through socialization and subsequent narrative identity work as they enter into ideologically infused organizations.

On top of that, still less is understood about how the processes associated with transcending the job impact the employment relationship in beneficial or detrimental ways. Thompson & Bunderson (2003), for example, theorize that although there are clearly benefits to having strong ideologies in organizations, these benefits should only be expected when the
ideological contract is maintained by both parties. The replenishing of the reservoir of belief in my findings suggests that an ideologically-infused organization might benefit from replenishing the reservoir in order to fulfill the implicit yet strong ideological currency that “the organization will provide a context in which the individual can contribute, directly or indirectly, to the cause” (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003; p. 574). If the belief is depleted, then individuals will no longer seek fulfillment of this contract. In addition, existing literature on ideological currency purports that a calling orientation, internalization, and commitment to a transcendent set of values are ‘theoretical cousins’ to the ideological dimension of the psychological contract (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). While existing literature on role adaptation focuses on transactional and relational dimensions of the psychological contract, less is known about socialization tactics for ideological dimensions where a person enacts a role that does not benefit oneself but instead another group in society. My model suggests that these processes which in turn fuel belief (this is highlighted throughout the role response of transcending the job) can be invoked by the organization. Consider the use of deliberate role calls whereby the newcomers were consistently asked to assess where they stood in relation to the values of the broader mission. These role calls invited individuals to transcend their jobs, and their response to transcend further fueled the belief that they started out with.

Second, encouraging individuals to embrace the paradox of their role in order to mobilize them for a mission emerged as an important and contributive finding for the literature on ideologically infused organizations. The current body of work on organizational paradox offers understanding about how paradox emerges and what kinds of outcomes it can be linked to (Lewis, 2000; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Luscher & Lewis, 2008; Quinn, 1988). One paradoxical tension discussed in existing research (Sheep, Kreiner, & Fairhurst, in press) that is particularly
relevant for the findings in Essay #2 is that of temporality. As Maclean et al (2014) posit, ideologies “link the past with the future” (Meyer, 1982; 47). Strategically managing for people that can become acclimated to and comfortable with paradox related to historical and temporal issues is no easy feat. If it were so, academics and practitioners would not continue to seek responses to the increasing paradox in their organizational environments.

Overall, the paradoxical tensions that newcomers were being encouraged to embrace – be it about dependence/independence or multiple stakeholders- converged in the paradox about what was acceptable and deemed appropriate in the past versus what is being presented as acceptable and appropriate for the present and future. The emergent model presented herein suggests that encouraging newcomers of ideologically infused organizations to embrace this type of paradox upfront enables them to have a paradigm shift in which they make sense of what is and what should be by considering who they have been and who they are becoming. Overall, calling a person to pursue a superordinate goal, namely to see themselves as a creator of something that they (and others in a broader movement) believe strongly in, offered yet another way to respond to the paradoxical tensions in more ‘virtuous’ ways (Smith & Lewis, 2011): suggesting ways to integrate and accept tensions between different stakeholders and elements of dependence. The ways that informants were encouraged to work in the midst of paradox warrants additional questions about how organizations can select and socialize individuals to navigate the specific challenges associated with paradox, a notion that is germane to change. Effectively finding, socializing, and managing employees that can view the world through the paradoxical lens thus poses a critical concern for leaders of organizations that are – or strive to be- infused with ideology.
Third, the idea that individuals, not only organizations, can be critical conduits of diffusing ideologies is another contribution of this study. Ideologies exist and intersect across the individual, organization, societal, and cultural levels of analysis (Simons & Ingram, 1997). Existing literature often exhorts the importance of organizational ideology because of the prevailing impact of organizations on their surrounding environments. While this is surely the case, my findings suggest that ideologies that are internalized at the individual level of analysis are also powerful given that individuals, through their behaviors that reflect their internalization, carry their beliefs into other organizations and have the potential to transmit them on to others.

Given that no study is without its limitations, I would be remiss to not discuss some of the limitations of the present study. For one, given that it is inductive, no causal interpretation can be made about the role calls and the role responses that the model outlines. Instead, the model I present introduces important theoretical linkages between the processes that future research would benefit from investigating and validating. Also, as with most inductive studies, data relied on retrospective sensemaking (on the part of the job coach leaders and job coaches). Although narrative sensemaking has been discussed at length in existing research (for example, see Ibarra & Barbalescu, 2010), future research on de-stigmatization and ideologically-infused organizations would still benefit from longitudinal data collection of more ‘in-the-moment’ role calls and responses. One way that future research could do this is theory experienced sample modeling. I surmise, however, that the present study contributes by offering the important constructs that future research would need to investigate.

CONCLUSION

Although stigmatization is divisive, mobilizing for individuals that can internalize an ideology aimed at de-stigmatization is one way to facilitate inclusion in organizations. Essay #2
studied the process of selecting and socializing individuals to do just that. Findings suggest that sensegiving and sensemaking activities were anchored in the development and sustenance of a reservoir of belief, thereby contributing to literatures that discuss de-stigmatization as a change process and ideologically-infused organizations.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

I use this final chapter to provide concluding comments and implications of my two-essay dissertation. At the outset of the dissertation, I noted that stigmatization plays an adversarial role to organizations’ strides towards inclusion. Evidence of this is provided by existing research on the importance of stigma, a discredited attribute (Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984), in the workplace. I also reviewed a rich body of extant research that shows that across different kinds of stigma, employees with stigmatized identities experience the following: discrimination in terms of less job offers (Farina & Felner, 1973); harassment (Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007; Waldo, 1999); poorer job attitudes (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Ragins et al., 2007), and hostile work environments (Hebl et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2014). I noted, however, that less is known about how organizations can foster a culture of inclusion through de-stigmatization. How can organizations and their members, particularly those of the marker group, facilitate the de-stigmatization, or “…the entrance into normality from pivotal deviance” (p. 210) of its members belonging to stigmatized groups? Beginning to answer this question was the driving force behind this two-essay of this dissertation. I addressed this question through two essays.

My first essay, titled “Bridging the Gap: Facilitating De-stigmatization through Go-Betweens”, took an inductive methodological approach to build a theoretical model about how the non-stigmatized actor can facilitate relationships between members of non-stigmatized and stigmatized groups in organizations. The resulting model, based on semi-structured interviews with 72 individuals familiar with the autism job coaching profession, highlighted a three-stage model of the ‘go-between’. It furthermore shed light on a process of localized de-stigmatization,
whereby the non-stigmatized actor creates and builds value that was not always there for the stigmatized. The theoretical model that I put forth suggests that this is done through interpersonal boundary work, thus also contributing to the literature on boundaries.

My second essay, titled “Bridging through Belief: Selecting and Socializing in Ideologically Infused Organizations”, also used inductive methodology but this time to build a theoretical model about how organizations select and socialize for its members to take on an ideologically-infused mission. The resulting model, based on 53 semi-structured interviews with job coaches, job coach leaders, and agency leaders plus analysis of job coach training manuals, highlighted the centrality of ‘belief’ as not only a characteristic of the organizational member’s cognitive and behavioral state, but also as something that has to be replenished through organizational socialization tactics. In addition, the model suggested that this is done through role calls (sensegiving from the organization) and role responses (sensemaking by the organizational member) that were anchored in the mission, and built upon by preparing for roles replete with paradox and calls to create.

For this dissertation, I set out to understand a practically and theoretically prevalent question – how do diverse organizations become inclusive? To address this broader question, I narrowed my focus to theories related to stigma, or de-valuation of individuals, and micro-foundations of change. Based on existing literature in stigma’s predominant focus on the stigmatized, or marked, individual, I focused on the relatively non-stigmatized, or marker, role in facilitating inclusion and organizational efforts to attract and retain that ensures their success. Taken together, findings from the two essays herein speak to the importance of individual and organizational efforts to enact, create, and perpetuate the change needed to accomplish this.
Existing literature on inclusion refers to a need to make changes to the informal social fabric of organizations (Nishii, 2013). Findings thus suggest that such changes rely in part on individuals that can bridge together members from marked and marker groups by breaking down the pre-conceived boundaries of difference and re-constructing those boundaries based on more realistic perceptions of differences, strengths, and weaknesses on both parties’ account. Practically speaking, by highlighting the important role that recognition of difference plays, in a time when ‘blindness’ to difference persists more than ever, my findings suggest quite the opposite. My findings also point to the power of emotional mechanisms such as empathy and compassion for being open to differences. Serving as proverbial melting agents, emotional mechanisms such as empathy and compassion tended to play an integral role in changing these boundaries.

Additionally, the call for understanding how to create inclusive organizations has surprisingly said little about how to change the mindsets of people within organizations in order to facilitate this shift. My findings thus also suggest that organizations with serious goals for diversity and inclusion must not only be strategic in their efforts to select and retain individuals based on their ability to accomplish a task related to their work, but that they must also be strategic in the selection and socialization of their members towards their diversity and inclusion goals. Moreover, while my findings speak to organizations focusing on diversity and inclusion, they are also transferrable to individuals needing to resolve other kinds of non-diversity related conflicts and organizations with non-diversity related ideologies. These individuals and organizations must be effective at being ‘go-betweens’ that can work through differences. And these organizations must be effective at not only selecting individuals that believe in the mission,
but also socializing them in a way that replenishes or further strengthen their belief in the mission.

Overall, findings from my dissertation contribute to stigma and diversity literature. By inciting dialogue about ways to change mindsets about devaluation of an attribute or identity within organizations, I hope that findings motivate future research on not only the experience of stigma as seen through the eyes of the stigmatized, but also the undoing of stigma as enacted through the non-stigmatized and encouraged by the organization. This promises to not only further our understanding of theory, but also contribute to answering a pressing question of today’s organizations.
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Jonczyk, C., Lee, Y., Galunic, C., & Bensaou, B. M. In press. Relational changes during role
transitions: The interplay of efficiency and cohesion. *Academy of Management Journal.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Autism</th>
<th>Disability and Employment, with an emphasis on Autism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>early 1900’s</td>
<td>First diagnosis of symptoms related to what is now known as autism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Sancte de Sanctis (in Italy) described children who would now be recognized as autistic- used the term “dementia infantilis”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>The term autism was coined by Dr. Eugene Bleuler in Zurich.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Dr. Lightner Witmer published first detailed case report of a “psychotic child” who for all intents and purposes would be diagnosed with autism today.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Eugene Minkowski introduced Bueler’s work to French audiences in 1927 book La schizophrenie</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930’s</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Hans Asperger used the word “autistic” in letters to colleagues</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Asperger used the word in a speech</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Leo Kanner landmark paper published (Autistic disturbances of affective contact in <em>The Nervous Child</em>)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Hans Asperger landmark paper published</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1950’s</td>
<td>Psychoanalysis era of autism diagnosis resulted in many blaming behavioral issues of children with autism on parents.</td>
<td>Government Employment Services sponsored initiatives to “Hire the Handicapped”. These initiatives used rhetoric suggesting to the employers that the workers were “no different” from workers without disabilities. At this point in history, “handicapped” meant mostly workers with physical disabilities (neurological conditions such as autism were not considered) and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960’s</td>
<td>Introduction of more rigorous scientific studies</td>
<td>Inclusion of neurological disabilities in the “Hire the Handicapped” employment services. They were typically deemed fit for sheltered workshops (i.e. “distinct workplaces outside of the employment mainstream that undertook low-skilled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>First ever epidemiological study of Kanner’s autism by Victor Lotter in Middlesex</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1967: Autism Research Institute founded by Bernard Rimland (original name, Child Behavior Research Institute)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970’s</td>
<td>Rutter and colleagues publish detailed clinical features of autism based on a longitudinal investigation of children’s profiles on intelligence tests and following up in adolescence and adult life; showed the genetic factors</td>
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<td>1973</td>
<td>Passage of Rehabilitation Act (no discrimination of disabilities by federal agencies)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Growth of inclusion of individuals with neurological conditions in employment mainstream</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Public Law 94-142 (The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) grants full access to educational services for all students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1980’s</td>
<td>Temple Grandin’s (professor of animal science and inventor; diagnosed with autism as a child) first memoir published (Emergence: Labeled Autistic)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehabilitation Act Amendment, the idea of “supported employment” was born.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supported employment grants went to all state VR agencies, and the money from these grants was intended for supported employment job development, coaching, and worksite supports to the person w/significant disability in order to maintain the job</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Rainman Movie</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APSE (Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst) founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Development about theories of the mind (Frith, 1989)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sue Miller’s novel, Family Pictures (about a severely autistic boy named Randall and the impact that his autism had on his family).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990’s</td>
<td>Sharp increase in ASD diagnosis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
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<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>ADA: prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications</td>
<td>Sharp increases in SSDI (federal program that provides benefits to working age adults who are determined to be unable to work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Grandin’s second memoir published (Thinking in Pictures)</td>
<td>Development of screening instruments by Baron-Cohen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Mercury rising (movie with Bruce Willis protecting an autistic boy w/savant skills)</td>
<td>Workforce Investment Act (WIA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ticket to Work (TTW) program designed by Clinton administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000’s</td>
<td>New genre of “autistic lit” or “aut lit”, storylines involving autistic characters became prevalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) authorized by Congress in the Department of Labor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ODEP's mission: to develop and influence policies and practices that increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ODEP’s vision: A world in which people with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With this came the idea of “customized employment” model for job coaching.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time; became an international best seller; about</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mozart and the Whale (movie about a romance between a young man and young woman with autism)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Ari Ne’eman starts Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Adam (movie about a young man w/Asperger’s and his romance w/a female neighbor)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2010’s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Temple Grandin Thinking in Pictures Movie</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ODEP launches Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autism Research Institute starts group focusing on adults which in turn also focuses on employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Too Sane for this World, a documentary on the unusual skills of people with autism</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Citizen Autistic, film challenging the money spent on cures for autism rather than facilitating inclusion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Diagnosis rates for autism reached an all-time high when national reports by the Center for Disease Control stated that 1 in 68 children were diagnosed to be on the autism spectrum</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehabilitation Act Amendment- included customized employment funding through OVR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE 2: ESSAY #1 PROTOCOL EVOLUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Original and Relevant Questions in Protocol</th>
<th>Additional Questions in Protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 May 2015</td>
<td>Tell me a little bit about your job. What is your role?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is a typical day at work like for you?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you do to help individuals with autism transition into the world of work?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Looking over your experience as a job coach, what would you say have been some challenges for you? How do you like to handle these challenges?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What are some examples of success stories? How would you define success?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 June 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>I’ve been hearing a lot about the fading process that job coaches use. Do you also do this? How do you go about fading, if so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 July/August 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Several job coaches have mentioned the need to juggle multiple ‘hats’ or roles. Do you experience that? If so, how do you manage it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several job coaches have mentioned the need to juggle multiple ‘hats’ or roles. Do you experience that? If so, how do you manage it?</td>
<td>What sorts of changes do you see in the employer and co-workers, if any?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What sorts of changes do you see in the employer and co-workers, if any?</td>
<td>Why do you believe that they experienced those changes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why do you believe that they experienced those changes?</td>
<td>Given that the objective of job coaching is integration, what does that mean to you? And how do you achieve it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Given that the objective of job coaching is integration, what does that mean to you? And how do you achieve it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td>Original and Relevant Questions in Protocol</td>
<td>Additional Questions in Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. July 2015</td>
<td><strong>1. For Job Coach Leaders</strong>&lt;br&gt;What characteristics would you say make a good job coach?&lt;br&gt;How do you go about finding people like this?&lt;br&gt;What kinds of challenges do you perceive your job coaches having?&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>2. For job coaches</strong>&lt;br&gt;What lead you to become a job coach?&lt;br&gt;What kind of training did you receive?&lt;br&gt;What kinds of values and behaviors were instilled in you during the training?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. August 2015</td>
<td><strong>1. For job coach leaders</strong>&lt;br&gt;What kind of training do your job coaches receive?&lt;br&gt;What kinds of values and behaviors does this training instill in them?&lt;br&gt;What model of job coaching do they follow?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. December 2015</td>
<td><strong>1. For job coaches</strong>&lt;br&gt;Several job coaches mention the importance of creativity in order to address some of the challenges of the job. Is this an important strategy for you? Why/why not? If so, when do you find that you need to use it the most?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. For job coach leaders

Several leaders mention the importance of belief. Is this important to your selection process? Why/why not?

How can you tell if someone has it?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Localized De-Stigmatization</th>
<th>Descriptions of Localized-De-stigmatization</th>
<th>Illustrative Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Value Crafting              | Statements reflecting desire to improve- and behaviors associated with improving-perceptions of the marked person’s worth in the workplace. | Providers work in partnership with supported employees on the best employment training approaches to meet the person’s needs, emphasizing typical workplace supports and the use of discreet, status enhancing teaching techniques. (Job Coach Training)  
As an often-quoted proverb suggests, "A picture is worth a thousand words." If this is true, imagery offers a powerful form of description for the job seeker. Too often, potential employers of people with disabilities perceive those with disabilities as something less than contributing employees. Effective imagery can help to bridge the gap between perception and reality (Training Manual)  
And he's learned proper time to socialize. Like when the guys are making sandwiches, he can't socialize. He'll deal with his stuff and he'll wait and then they'll talk to him and he'll talk back. They get in roads because he likes cars and so they'll talk about cars and different things. So everything is going good for him. He's made an attachment to this job just what I wanted him to do. (JC28) |
| Go-Betweens Intrapersonal Boundary Work | Descriptions of Intrapersonal Boundary Work | Illustrative Quotes |
| Business Professional v Helping Professional | Demands of the job that reflect the need to have human service related skills and abilities and demands of the job to have more sales and marketing related skills and abilities. | So the salesman in me says, "You're failing!" and the other compassionate therapist person in me says, "But these people are gaining. They are getting better. (JC18)  
We are definitely teachers, not a research based organization at heart. We’re an intervention based program. It’s what we do. (JC6)  
The role that we serve being so strong is I see as advocacy being the strongest piece. That's probably why I went into business. It was the advocacy piece for our clients and how important that is that you advocate for them to the employers and knowing that they have support that they can count on us. (JC17)  
Well the whole concept I mean you kind of learn it as you go that it takes a unique person to be a job coach so to speak. IN the sense that you’re not wearing one hat. You’re waring many hats as a job coach. One day you might be the social worker, the case manager. You might be the counselor for the family and the individual. (JC30) |
| Psychological Flexibility | Staying nimble to the different demands through patience, self-care, and humor. | But I think keeping as much flexibility as you can is usually helpful. Cause there are sometimes like employers will call and they want to interview tomorrow. I’m like whoa, what. So having a little bit of wiggle room and preparing families for that ahead of time. (JC7)  
Just being a job coach in general I guess that word again just having patience with the clients. (JC8)  
Deep breaths and just thinking not letting it get to me right there. I’ve been stressed but I haven’t let anything stressed me out to the max. I don’t let it get that far because I have a lot of patience and stuff.(JC8)  
I don’t know. Maybe a sense of humor [in response to interviewer question: “What do you think job coaches need, if anything, in order to achieve what everyone wants them to achieve?”] (JC19) |
| Interpersonal Boundary Work: Marker Boundary Intrusion | Figuring out what could differentiate the marker and marker in such a way that the marker is de-valued, or stigmatized. | So when somebody comes in -- They come in for job development, we really look at what are your -- just what are your skills. (JC16)  
But if the place isn’t accepting of that then it’s just not a good fit in our mind. We need to find a place that is going to be willing to have a job coach there and train and be willing to deal with the little things that come up as they come up. Cause they’re going to be little issues here and there if they just have to have at the patience and |
understanding to work through it with us. (JC7)

So in other words if we go to an employer and we walk in. He said here’s our job description. Everything is on the job description. There’s no flexibility or you got to come in or I see there’s lot of disorganization. If I see this….Everybody has to be doing a top notch and all of our communication is verbal and there’s all this talking back and forth. So we look at the way the organization is being run. And by looking at that, we said this is not going to work for this individual with autism. (JC6)

<p>| Value Swapping | Exacerbating strengths of marked individual to replace weakness of the marker. | So now you’re going to break down that one person’s task into two jobs so now even though there was never a person hiring before he wasn’t looking about hiring someone I’m about to just solve this problem for him. Listen I have a guy that enjoys like washing dishes. Like he’ll wash those dishes for you and that will eliminate your guy running back and forth trying to keep up with the dishes and keep up with the dining room because your dining room was a little bit hectic today. (JC30) Then we go into job development after that. Whatever job we look for is based off the assessment that I have done with them, the supplemental evaluation and kind of try to look for that job where they show their strengths and feel comfortable. (JC18) They come in for job development, we really look at what are your -- just what are your skills. Then we do a company networking with employers, internet applications. (JC16) Instead of like an assessment where you give people tests and things like that this is like you get to know a person, you look at all their existing skills and you look at like conditions for success for them once you get to know them. You look at the contributions they could make. (JC23) |
| Sales Work | Engaging in work that mirrors that of a sales or marketing professional. | We find them by people coming to us and by us knocking on doors. (JC6) Remember you’re not selling. When I go out as a job coach, I’m not going out selling that person's disability. I go out selling that person’s ability. (JC30) I like going door to door and knocking on doors talking to managers. (JC30) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boundary Bridging</th>
<th>Empathizing with Marked/Marker</th>
<th>Gaining insight into-and validating- the unique perspectives of the marked and marker.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My belief is that a strong rapport whether it's a straight counselling, relationship or whether it’s something like this where it’s kind of counseling in vocational work kind of a melded deal building a strong rapport with the people you work with, with your clients just sets the tone for I think growth to occur. (JC17)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>So if we understand then, well we had to change the mind of these people. And their disabilities also. We had to tell them this is a person with this kind of disability but very good worker. If you know what you are dealing with, only then you can help us. And then I talk to them. I learn about my customers; therefore, I challenge them. None of my customers was ever dismissed because unless they kill somebody, you know. (JC 20)</td>
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<td>You know what they want to get done and the frustration that they feel. I also feel the frustration of the client too because they are not able to do this. Imagine for most people, it would he harder to understand the perceptions of the person with the disability because, how can I… I can’t. I mean I can understand it cognitively. I can say I know what your issues are but the person themselves. If they are unable to tell you, you are guessing, it’s all guessing game. And I think it’s easy to understand if you are sensitive enough to know with that person, the person with the disability when something is not right and sometimes, you just have to know. There is just an inner knowing you have to have to know &quot;Something is not right here.&quot; &quot;This is not working.&quot; But how many people have to know? (JC18)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiating Flexibility</th>
<th>Using space, time, and language to pair up inflexible devalued characteristics of a person that makes them different with flexible valued elements of the organization (and vice versa),</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I guess one thing that I ran into a lot is people not being able to focus on things. So it’s like no matter what stage they’re in that’s a problem. You have to be able to focus on what we’re doing and focus on the work to be able to show me what they can do in assessment or to learn it during training. So a lot of what we do is trying to minimize distractions and make structure that is as clear as it can possibly be. (JC7)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I looked around. I was like how can I make this more predictable for my client and shift their work back on them. So what I did I observed it. Yeah. I mean this is their job. This is your job. Why are you giving this to him? I mean why is he at your beck and call? I couldn’t understand it. I couldn’t wrap my brain around that one. So I’m like I’m just going to create a place. You put all your things here. Everything right here. So when the coworkers need it, you go to this designated area and you can get it. (JC10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s like let’s take for instance I’ll say Jon. We have this job. You have the skills to do it. Let’s put in there and let’s give it a shot. He went in there. He tried it. Yes, he could do it. But there were other factors that came in that kept him from being successful. So that was a learning curve for us. (JC9)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compassion Work</th>
<th>Behaviors that allowed one of the</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Sometimes it works to do that one on one just kind of teaching them from an autism perspective this is where</td>
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</table>
actors to suffer with one or both of the other actors. they’re coming from and helping them see where my client is and helping my client see where their supervisors are too and trying to help them understand these are their expectations and this is why. Just kind of bridging that gap I guess cause a lot of our guys don’t have the communication to do that. So a lot of what we do is facilitating communication. (JC7)

I think you can teach them compassion that they then pass along to their person. (JC18)

So if we understand then, well we had to change the mind of these people. And their disabilities also. We had to tell them this is a person with this kind of disability but very good worker. If you know what you are dealing with, only then you can help us. And then I talk to them. I learn about my customers; therefore, I challenge them. None of my customers was ever dismissed because unless they kill somebody, you know. (JC20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Boundary Work: Fading from Marked-Marker Boundary</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Illustrative Quotes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational Boundary Exit</td>
<td>Behaviors and thoughts associated with leaving the 3-person relationship so that it is, for the most part, a 2-person relationship between the marked and marker.</td>
<td>This shifting of responsibility from the employment specialist to co-workers and supervisor must occur in order for a relationship to develop between the customer and his/her co-workers. (Training Manual) Okay. So now you know, small talk you might be in the lunch room with the individual. I’m like hey did you meet John Doe yet? What’s your name? You’re the mediator. You’re the one the ice breaker. Because that kid at the end of the job might sit in that office for a long time and never say anything to anyone (JC30) We sit down with them and say I’m not sure if you really need us anymore. Let’s try to back out a little bit. Sometimes it’s hard because they their little routine round and they start saying but you always come every Tuesday at 2o’clock. I’m like yeah I know. But we’re going to every other Tuesday at 2o’clock. And then we’re going to start going every three Tuesdays and then I’m just going to stop coming. You can call me once a month and see how that goes. (JC6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distal Boundary Assessment</td>
<td>Thoughts and behaviors associated with keeping track of the relationship between the marked and marker from a</td>
<td>I see people once or twice a week. I placed a few people recently so I’ll go and see this one guy after I’m done here and just see how he’s doing. Talk to managers, how is he doing, and really that’s about it. (JC19) So currently, I’m keeping my long term support people too. They get about three hours a month just to go stop by and visit and check in with them and the employer and make sure everything is good. (JC7)</td>
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</table>
I saw one client that I job coached and she works at a movie theater. I placed her nearby at Orchard shopping center. So I stopped in to see her. I typically visit her about twice a week and the job there with that. We do talk about her job issues but she also feels comfortable talking about some of her family issues and some of the spiritual things that she goes through as well. (JC17)

| Compassionate Sales Work | Engaging in work that mirrors that of both a helping and a sales or marketing professional by connecting and disconnecting, respectively. | And then I end stabilization whenever I know it’s time for me to walk away completely. And I still do the follow up. (JC8)

So now that manager sometimes may not feel comfortable seeing that he’s doing something wrong because we’re human beings and we’re all – we don’t want to hurt no one’s feelings. But sometimes you have to be the one now to say listen you’re not doing a good job as you think you are. You need to work on these steps. (JC30) |
### TABLE 5: ESSAY #2, SELECTING AND SOCIALIZING FOR A RESERVOIR OF BELIEF ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reservoir of Belief</th>
<th>Descriptions of Reservoir of Belief</th>
<th>Illustrative Quotes</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Belief**          | An understanding and trust in the mission of the organization. | The first – the most important thing is that they have to unequivocally believe that the person can add value and can work. Everything orbits around that – that employment professional has to possess 100% belief that the person can be successful…they have to believe that that person can be a successful and a contributing member of our community. (JCL14)  
...before an agency determines it desired outcomes and goals, it must determine what the organization believes and how it gets others, internally and externally, to believe these things also (Training manual)  
So you know not all people are special educator. People maybe who have a good business background and they really understand the business piece. If you understand the business piece and you kind of believe just like intellectually, "I believe in the employability of people with disabilities. Okay, well I can teach you." (JCL11)  
That was not happening on my watch because I will find a capable job for them. I believe they all can be, they're all destined to do a very nice job that they can enjoy. (JC28) |
| **Persistence**     | Willingness to continue trying when times get tough. | So you know what I do in order -- when people say that they're interested in this job, I have them do ride along with the employment specialist. And they just ride along and see the different jobs and the different people that we serve. There are some people who don’t ever want to contact me back after that. (JCL11)  
For me, it’s is this person motivated to overcome obstacles? (JCL12)  
and not just saying no, or it’s too hard, too difficult that I never sort of give up, but they’re always sort of looking and saying, this person is really challenged. What kind of job could we find or what were -- if I don’t know what that job is, here are the characteristics that job needs to be. (JCL6) |
| **Potential for Creative Problem Solving** | Signs that the person can come up with alternative, out-of-the box, solutions. | I asked them how they problem solve, how do they do solutions and everything. If they basically come up with a good idea and they answered all those questions then I say yes you’re right for this job. (JCL6)  
...make sure on the job with people they come up with really creative solutions to help people learn their job and it’s not like something you find in textbook but they seem to have different strategies.(AL7) |
| **Socializing for a Reservoir of Belief: Role Calls** | Descriptions of Role Calls | Illustrative Quotes |

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| Remember the Mission | Calls to reflect upon and align with the overarching values and goals. | Reinforcing the message of the mission is accomplished through diverse methods, including staff meetings, small team meetings facilitated by the agency leader, focus groups interactive policy forums, and other internal events or media exposure (Training manual)  
Remember the whole excitement of supported employment and the reason, hopefully, you are in this field. What will keep you and your staff working in supported employment is working with those folks that nobody else wants to work with (Job Coach Training). |
|---|---|
| Embrace Paradox | Calls to understand, accept, and manage the juxtaposing values and/or philosophies of the work. | Do individuals served by the supported employment program consistently achieve truly meaningful job outcomes? Who selects these jobs and do these employment opportunities reflect informed customer choice and control? The indicators must also reflect the perspective of employers. Are employers satisfied with the work produced by the individuals in supported employment and the quality of the ongoing support services received from the supported employment program? (Job Coach Training)  
The key thing here, that we've learned from 1982 to 2001, is that you want to build strategic relationships with businesses. You don't want to just make a placement, and then hit, and then never go back again. You want a long term relationship with business and industry because they are your other customer. (Job Coach Training)  
And so the whole concept of supported employment was to have a real job with real pay coming from an employer to the individual using professional staff support, coworker support, or whatever was necessary in order to help that person get to the level of increased independence with the full understanding that he/she may need help for a number of years. (Job Coach Training) |
| Create the Future | Calls to achieve the mission and produce something new by thinking of the future with boundless possibilities. | Considering the value created for the individual and the business, efforts [for job carving] are well worth it. (Training manual)  
When the focus is only on existing attributes and competencies, the person's value to the workplace may be inadvertently limited…with a dual focus on existing and potential attributes and competencies, the opportunities are expanded (Training manual)  
The organization promotes a learning culture in which creativity, innovation, and risk taking are supported and where staff feel empowered. (Job Coach Training – in reference to the kind of organization a job coach should be in) |
| Socializing for a Reservoir of Belief: Role Responses | Descriptions of Role Responses | Illustrative Quotes |
| Transcending the Job | Seeing the job as a fulfillment of something that is 'bigger than' the person or their economic welfare. | Yeah. I can only speak for myself but it's definitely not the pay check. (JC28)  
And I'm thinking that would really ruin my week 'cause I would have to be there with him to train him. But I couldn’t say anything. It’s not about me. It's about him. (JC?)  
I've been successful businessman but something's missing like saying "Okay, what do I want to contribute where I can do something and contribute and help change the world?" I think that's what more as a calling for that. (JC 16)  
I don't care whether you give me a raise or not a raise. You can do whatever you like. (JC19) |
| Drawing on Past Selves | Referring to (and often merging) instances in their personal or professional history that provided repertoires for facilitating dependence and independence or handling the interests and needs of multiple stakeholders | I worked in a lot of different industries before it came in. I have a lot of different types of knowledge I think which helps to make me good at what I do. I have been in the office setting, in a retail setting, in a restaurant setting, hospitality. I have done so many different types of thing and it's really I think helped me be a better teacher. Little things, I have had injuries that now I can look back and relate to. I love my son and I can relate to the students who have DP and can't use that hand. It's just little things that help me relate better for my students so I can do better at finding accommodation for some of those disability. (JC 25)  
Previously, I was a paraprofessional. I have a different job. But right before I was his job coach, I was a paraprofessional in an early intervention classroom. This is actually easier cause all those kids were nonverbal. (JC 14)  
I went back at school to get my master’s to be a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist and Theresa came to one of my classes actually and I had already applied here and then she said, "If you want that job like you want this job.” It was just very serendipitous but I have worked with people with disabilities forever, I am a horticulturist. My last career was a horticultural therapist. (JC18) |
| Creatively Crafting | Negotiating what is by keeping in mind a notion of limitless possibilities for what could be in the future | ...we need to be creative and understanding a lot of people. you don't know -- not everybody fits into the same mold and what works for one person doesn't work for another. (JC25)  
Once we do that assessment we then – that’s part of our assessment process. Then that helps us guide where we think they’re going to have troubles in their employment setting. (JC 6)  
During the assessment I’m able to kind of see, kind of already get the idea of what structure they’ll need on the job as far as if they need a box to check off schedules or you need them to cover them completely and let me be out of their sight. (JC8) |
FIGURE 1: GO-BETWEENS AND THE PROCESS OF LOCALIZED DE-STIGMATIZATION

'Going Between' Process

Conflicting Role Demands → Internal Boundary Work

Interpersonal Boundary Work: Value Crafting

Marker Boundary Evasion

Rejected-Marker Boundary Bridging

Failing from Marked Boundary

LOCALIZED DE-STIGMATIZATION

Stigmatized

Non-Stigmatized
FIGURE 2: SELECTING AND SOCIALIZING FOR A ‘RESERVOIR OF BELIEF’

The Mission

Demand:
Recruit and Socialize
Change Agents

Reservoir of Belief

Role Responder’s Sensing

Role Responder’s Crafting

Transcending the Role

Drawing on past work

Role Calls
Remember the Mission

Embrace paradox

Create the Future

Paradigm Shift

Flexible Mindset

Role Sender Sensegiving

Key Characteristic in Search Process
CURRICULUM VITAE

TIFFANY D. JOHNSON

EDUCATION

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• Ossian R. MacKenzie Outstanding Teaching Award (Spring 2015)
• Smeal Small Research Grant (Spring 2015)
• Pennsylvania State University’s Africana Research Center Grant (Fall 2014)
• Smeal Small Research Grant (Fall 2014)
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