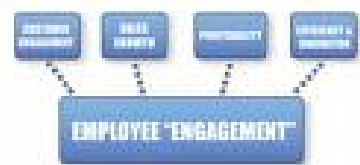
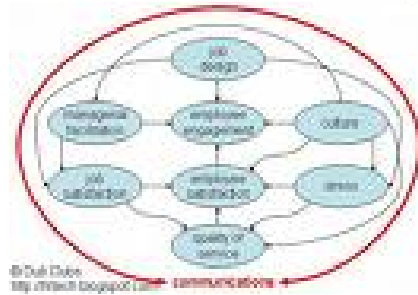
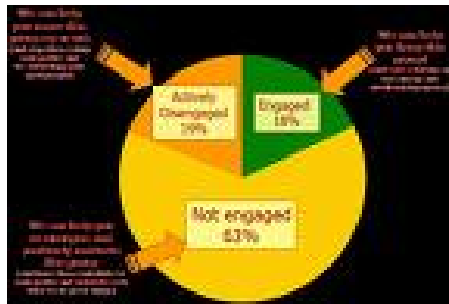


Employee Engagement: A “Win-Win”

John P. Meyer PhD
Department of Psychology
The University of Western Ontario

Ubiquitous Engagement!



What is Engagement?

We might know it when we see it ...



... but can we define it?

In Search of a Definition

What Wikipedia has to say ...

“This article or section is in need of attention from an expert on the subject.”

In Search of a Definition

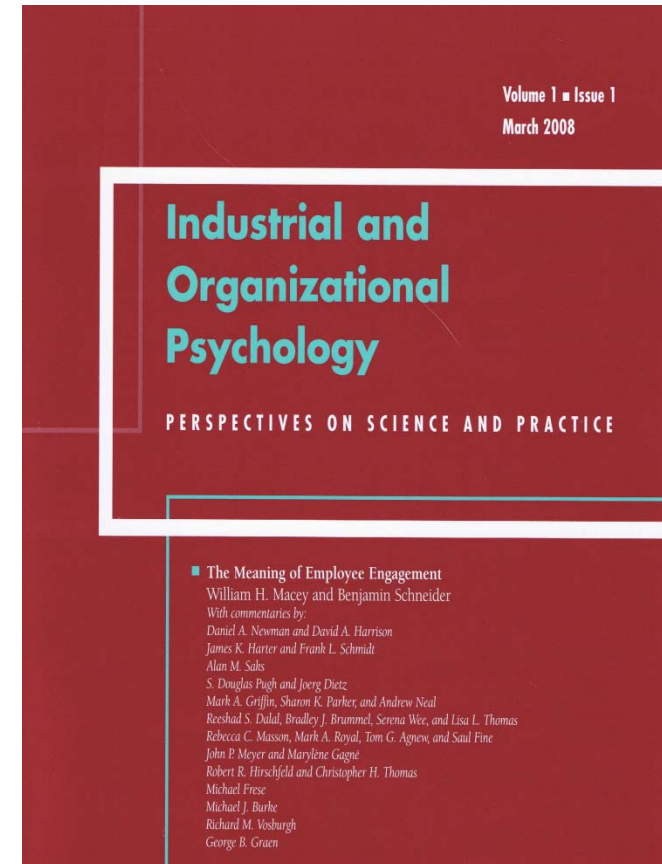
- William Kahn (AMJ, 1990, p. 694)

“I defined personal engagement as the harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances.”

What is Engagement?

Macey & Schneider (IOP, 2008)

- Comprehensive review of both academic and practitioner literatures
- Identified 3 forms of engagement:
 - State
 - Behavior
 - Trait



The Macey & Schneider Model

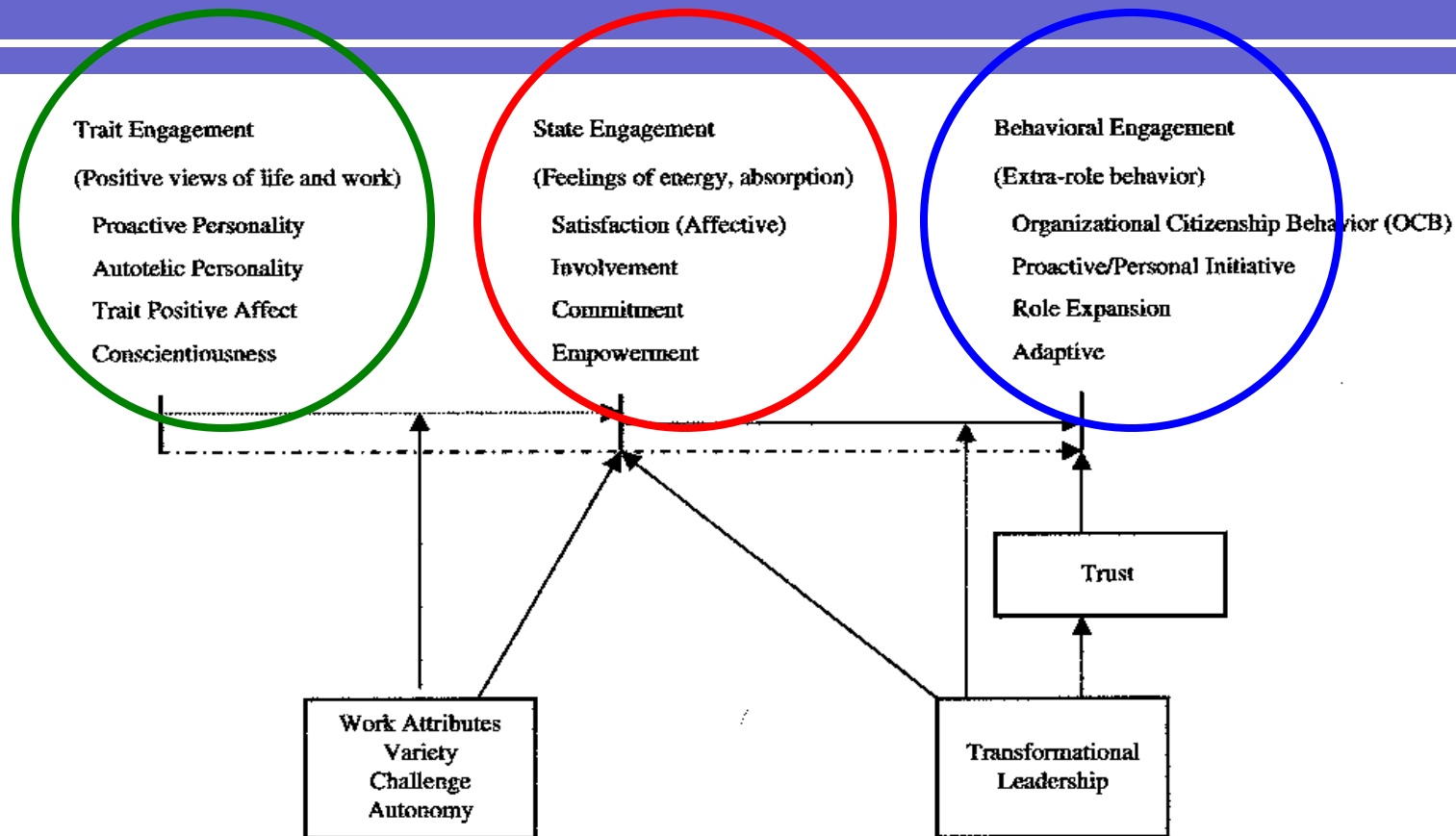


Figure 1. Framework for understanding the elements of employee engagement.

Macey & Schneider (2008, p. 6)

Engagement as a Trait

“the [dispositional] tendency to experience work in positive, active, and energetic ways and to behave adaptively” (Macey & Schneider, 2008, p. 21)

- Related but not identical to:
 - proactive personality
 - autotelic personality
 - positive trait affectivity
 - conscientiousness

Engagement as Behavior

“adaptive behavior intended to serve an organizational purpose, whether to defend and protect the status quo in response to actual or anticipated threats or to change and/or promote change in response to actual or anticipated events.” (Macey & Schneider, 2008, p. 18)

- Related but not identical to:
 - organizational citizenship behavior
 - proactive/personal initiative
 - role expansion

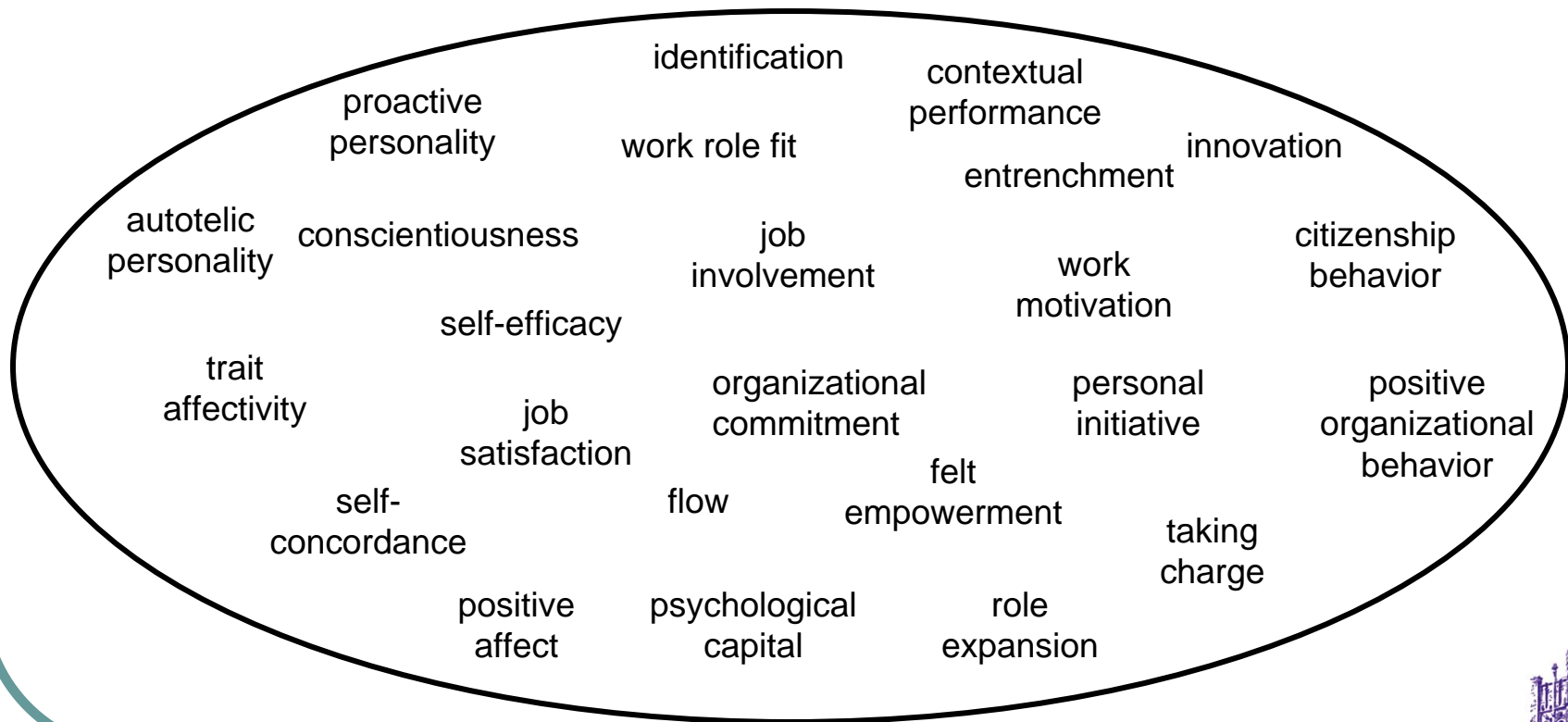
Engagement as a State

“a strong affective tone connoting at a minimum high levels of involvement (passion, absorption) in the work and the organization (pride, identity) as well as affective energy (enthusiasm, alertness) and a sense of self presence in work.” (Macey & Schneider, 2008, p. 14)

- Related but not identical to:
 - satisfaction (affective)
 - involvement
 - commitment
 - felt empowerment

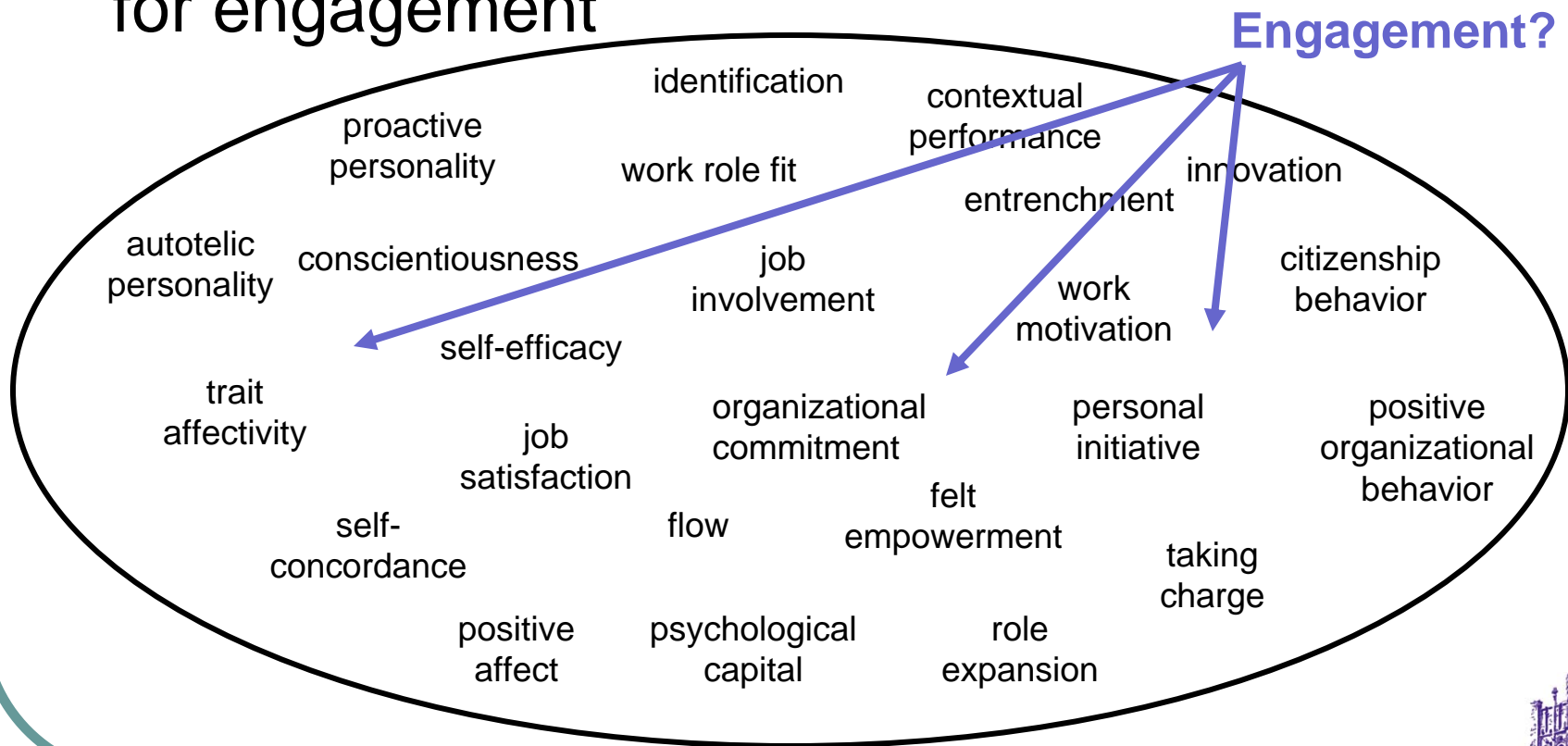
Taking Stock

- Engagement is similar to a lot of other constructs in a broad nomological network!



The Bad News

- It might be impossible to find a unique niche for engagement



Science vs. Practice

“The notion of employee engagement is a relatively new one, one that has been heavily marketed by human resource (HR) consulting firms that offer advice on how it can be created and leveraged. Academic researchers are now slowly joining the fray, and both parties are saddled with competing and inconsistent interpretations of the meaning of the construct.”

Macey & Schneider (2008, p. 3)

Does science lag practice?

In Defense of Science!

“Existing theory and research in I/O psychology provides a great deal more insight into the meaning, development, and consequences of employee engagement than they are given credit for.”

Me (now)

My Objectives

- Provide an evidence-based model of engagement based on ...
 - The three-component model (TCM) of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997)
 - Self-determination Theory (SDT) of Motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000)
- Provide additional evidence that engagement is a “win-win”

Engagement & the TCM

What is Commitment?

Commitment is a force (mindset) that binds an individual to a target and/or course of action of relevance to that target

(adapted from Meyer & Herscovitch, *HRMR*, 2001)

Commitment Mindsets

- Affective Commitment
 - A strong desire to maintain a relationship or persist in a course of action
- Normative Commitment
 - An obligation to maintain a relationship or persist in a course of action
- Continuance Commitment
 - A need to maintain a relationship or persist in a course of action

Mindset Matters!

Meta-analysis of links to organization-relevant “outcomes”

	AC	NC	CC
Turnover Intention	-.51	-.39	-.20
Turnover	-.17	-.16	-.10
Voluntary Absence	-.22	--	.04
Job Performance	.16	.06	-.07
Citizenship Behavior	.32	.24	-.01

Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky (*JVB*, 2002)

Mindset Matters!

Meta-analysis of links to employee-relevant “outcomes”

	AC	NC	CC
Stress	-.24	--	.14
Work-family Conflict	-.20	-.04	.24

Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky (*JVB*, 2002)

Mindset Matters!

AC relates positively to ...

- Physical well-being (Siu, 2002)
- Mental health (Grawitch et al., 2007)
- General health (Bridger et al., 2007)
- Positive Affect (Thoresen et al., 2003)
- Life satisfaction (Zickar et al., 2004)

AC relates negatively to ...

- Negative affect (Thoresen et al., 2003)
- Stress/distress (Lambert et al., 2008)
- Burnout symptoms (Grawitch et al., 2007)

Mindset Matters!

CC relates positively to ...

- Job-related tensions (Irving & Coleman, 2003)
- Emotional exhaustion (King & Sethi, 1997)

CC relates negatively to ...

- Life satisfaction (Zickar et al., 2004)

New Developments in the TCM

Commitment Profiles

- AC, NC, and CC combine to create more complex mindsets

Examples:

NC + AC → “moral imperative profile”

NC + CC → “indebted obligation profile”

Profiles & Behavior: An Illustration

Hypothesis:

- Employees' intention to stay and discretionary behavior will vary across commitment profiles

Sample:

- Employees in 3 Alberta Hospitals

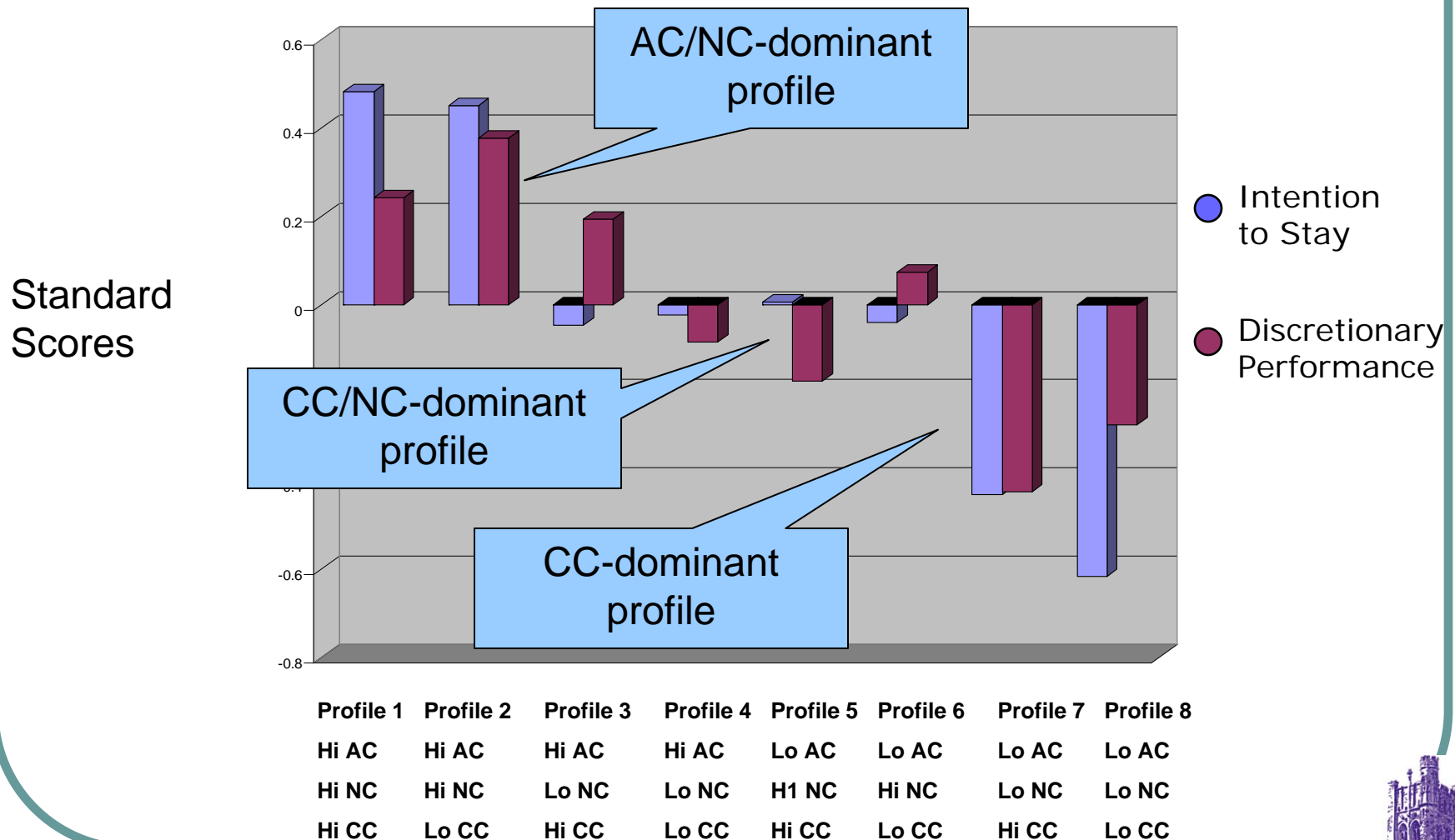
Gellatly, Meyer & Luchak (*JVB*, 2006)

Profiles & Behavior: An Illustration

Measures

- AC, NC, & CC
 - Commitment “profiles” created by designating employees at above or below average on each component
- Self-reported Behavior
 - Intention to stay
 - Discretionary performance

Profiles & Behavior: An Illustration



Adapted from Gellatly, Meyer & Luchak (*JVB*, 2006)



Engagement and the TCM

Contributions of the TCM

- Acknowledges variation in commitment mindsets
- Links these mindsets to employer- and employee-relevant outcomes
- Identifies antecedents of the mindsets to serve as a guide to management
- Can be applied to multiple work-relevant foci (e.g., team; change initiatives)

Engagement and SDT

What is Work Motivation?

“... a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration.”

Pinder (1988, p. 11)

According to SDT, motivation can vary in

- Intensity
- Quality (motivational state)

SDT: The Autonomy Continuum

Amotivation

Absence of intentional regulation

Lack of Motivation

Extrinsic Motivation

External Regulation

Contingencies of reward and punishment

Controlled Motivation

Introjected Regulation

Self-worth contingent on performance; ego involvement

Moderately Controlled Motivation

Identified Regulation

Importance of goals, values, and regulation

Moderately Autonomous Motivation

Integrated Regulation

Coherence among goals, values, and regulations

Autonomous Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation

Interest and enjoyment of the task

Inherently autonomous motivation

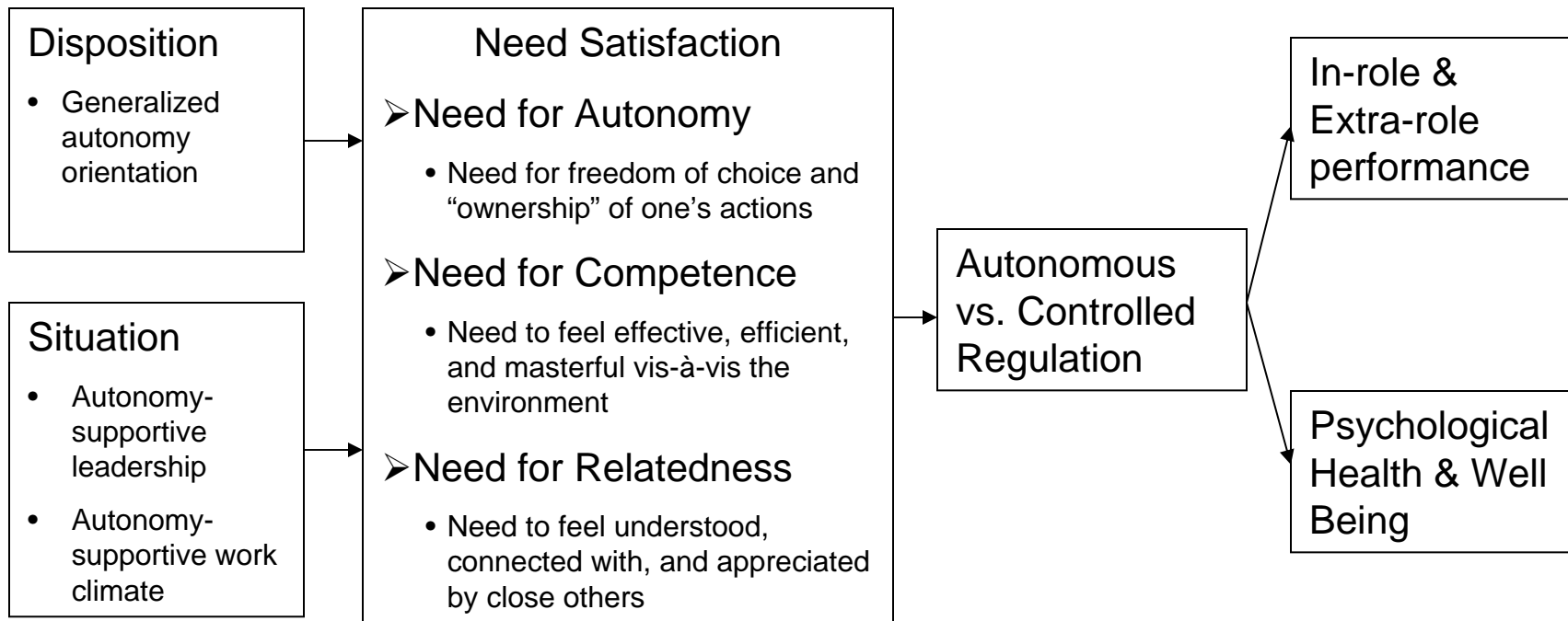
Gagné & Deci (*JOB*, 2005)



Basic Human Needs

- Satisfaction of basic human needs serves as the basis for autonomous regulation
 - Need for Autonomy
 - Need for freedom of choice and “ownership” of one’s actions
 - Need for Competence
 - Need to feel effective, efficient, and masterful vis-à-vis the environment
 - Need for Relatedness
 - Need to feel understood, connected with, and appreciated by close others

Self-Determination Theory



Some Evidence

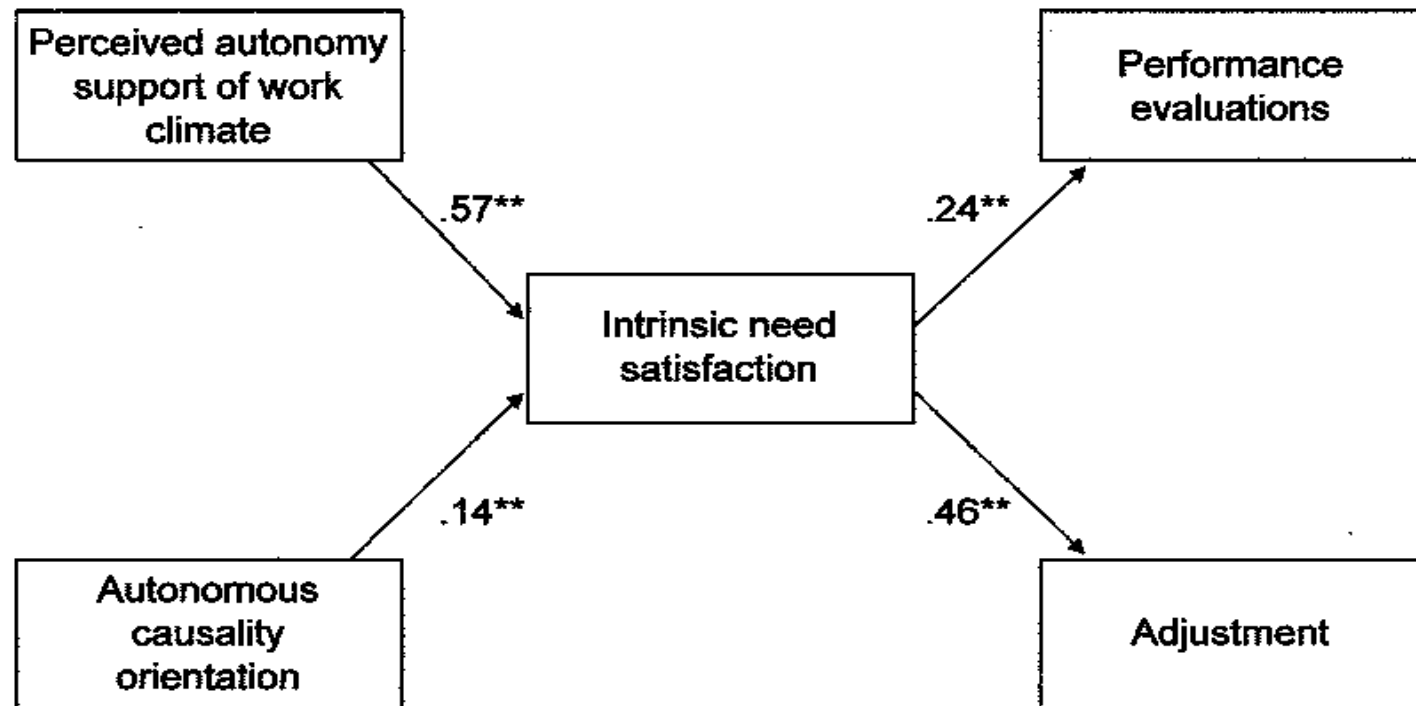


Figure 1. Parameter estimates for path analysis of the intrinsic need satisfaction model of work performance and adjustment.

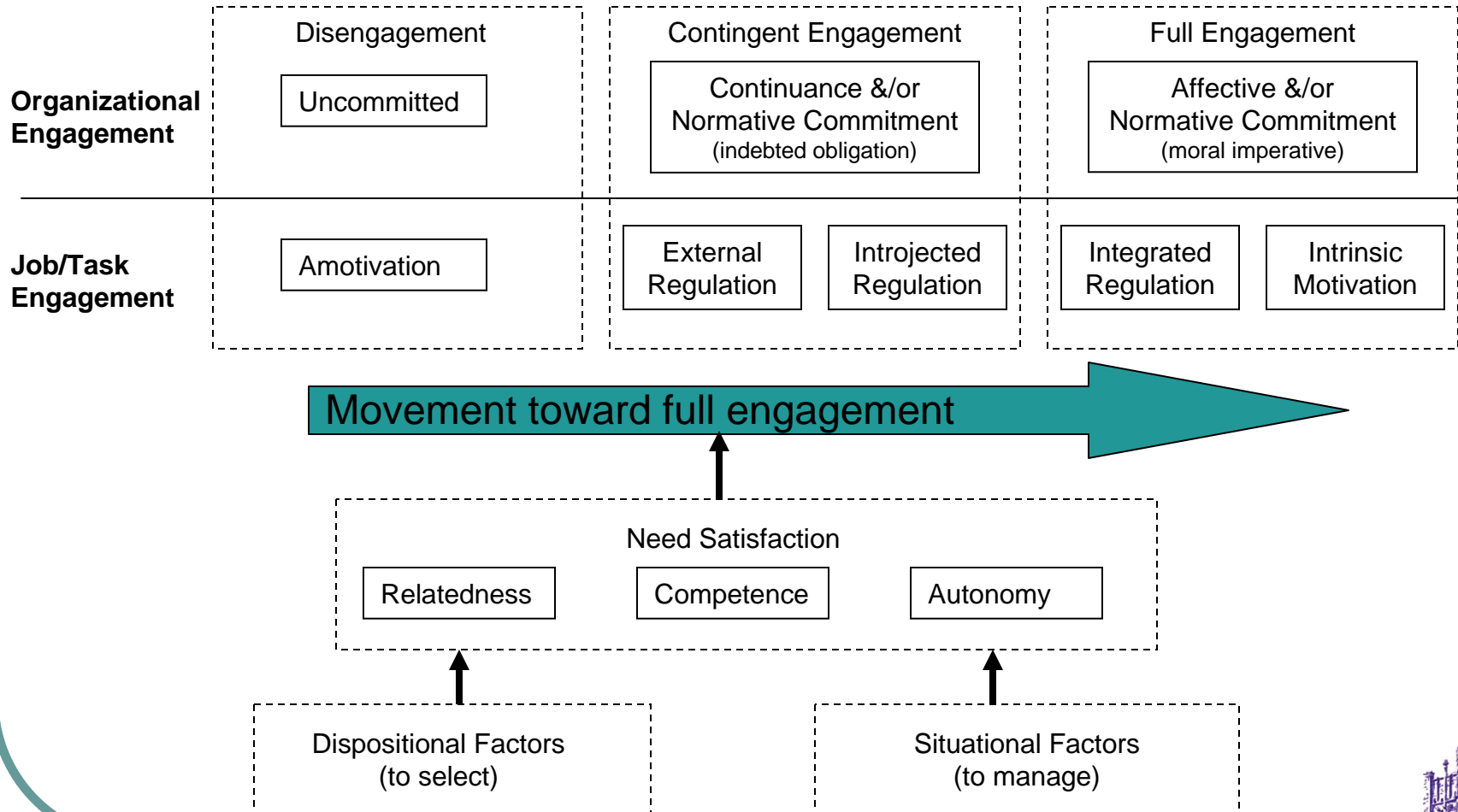
Baard, Deci, & Ryan (*JASP*, 2004, p. 2061)

Engagement and SDT

Contributions of SDT

- Acknowledges variation in motivational states (in addition to intensity)
- Links motivational states to ...
 - positive work behaviors
 - psychological well-being
- Identifies personal and situational antecedents of the psychological states
- Addresses the “origins” of the psychological states – core psychological needs

Putting It All Together



Some Supporting Evidence

Sample:

- 3 Health and Social Service Orgs. (N = 402)

Measures:

- AC, NC, CC (Meyer et al., 1993)
- Motivational states (Gagne et al., 2008)
- Need satisfaction (Sheldon et al., 2001)
- PA & NA (Watson et al., 1988)
- General Health Complaints (Goldberg, 1972)
- Peer-rated In-role Perf. (Williams & Anderson, 1991)
- Peer-rated OCBI & OCBO (Lee & Allen, 2002)

Adapted from Parfyonova (2009)



Some Supporting Evidence

Focus of Analysis:

- Profiles of commitment

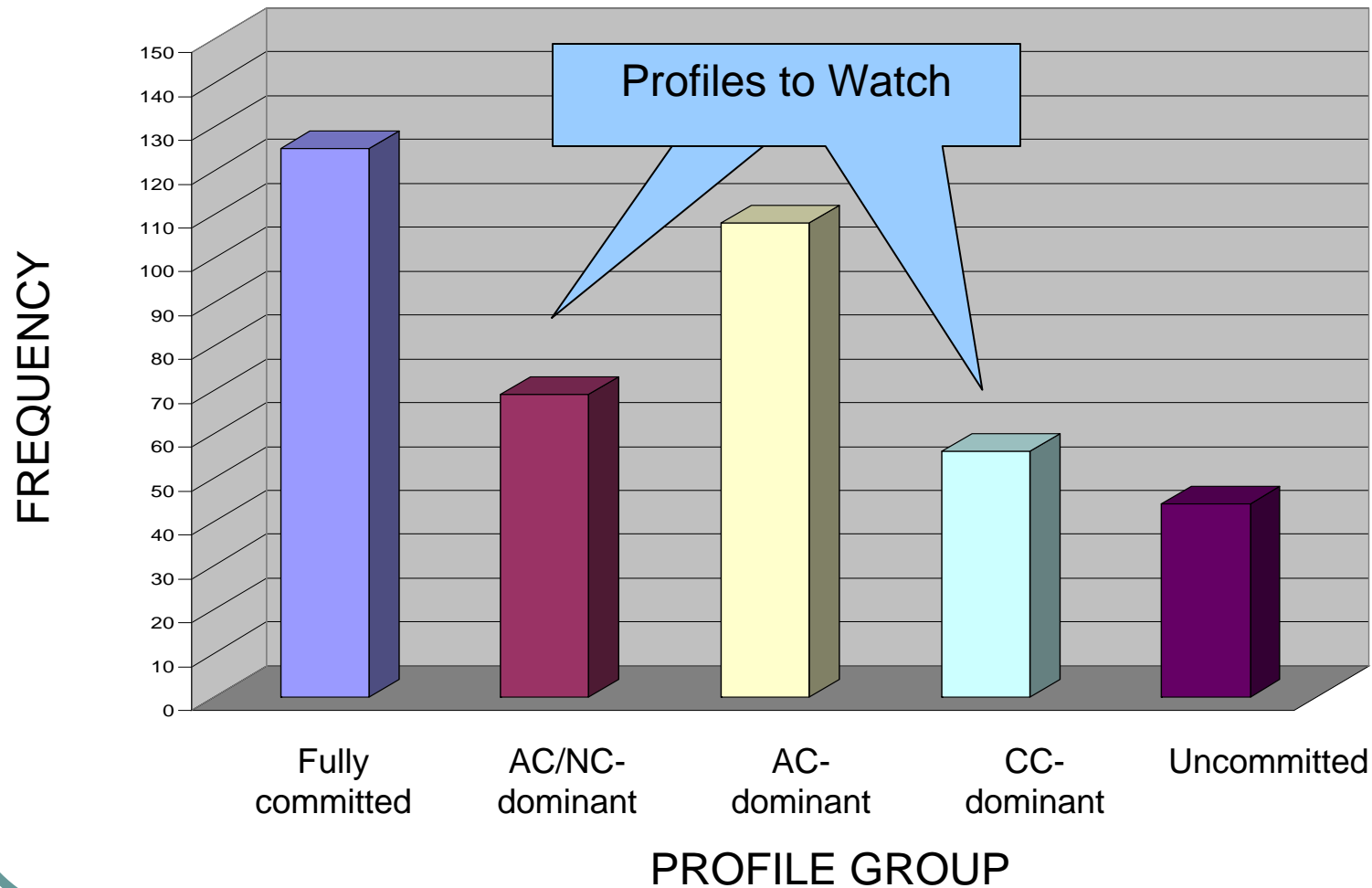
Hypotheses:

- Profile groups will differ in: need satisfaction, motivational state, performance, well-being
- Optimal profiles will be high on AC and NC

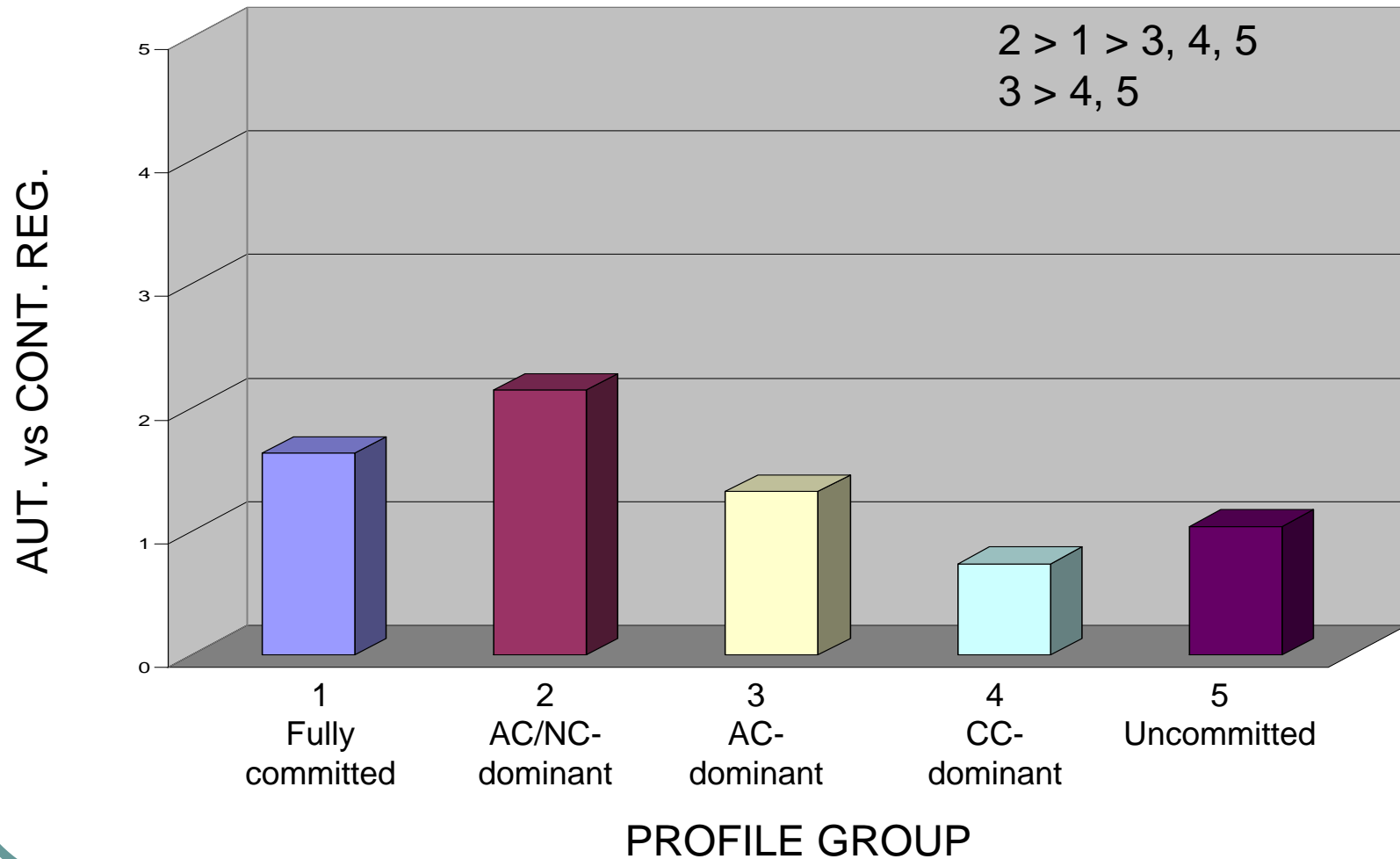
Data Analysis:

- K-means cluster analysis (5 clusters)
- One-way ANOVA & Post-hoc comparisons

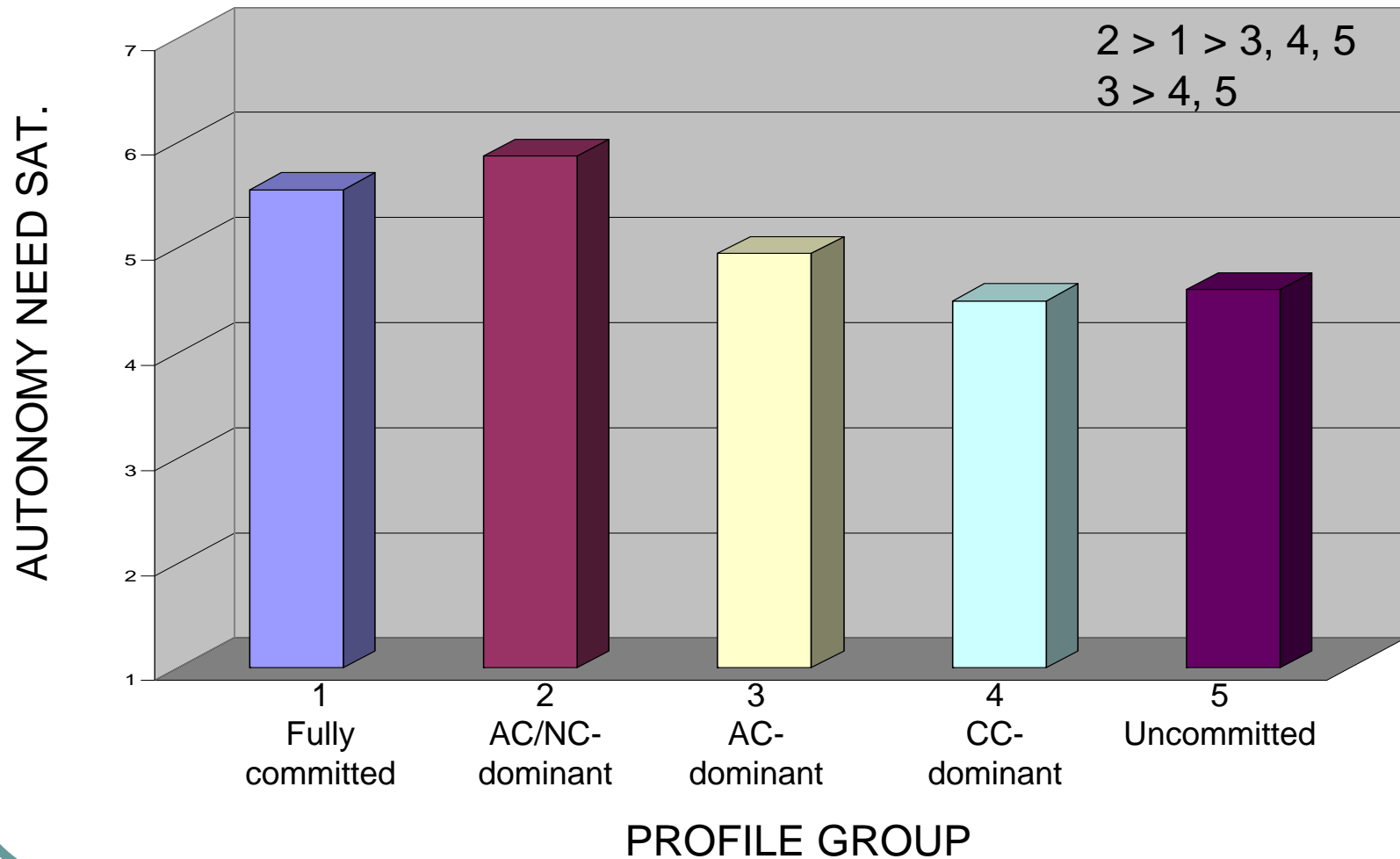
Profile Frequencies



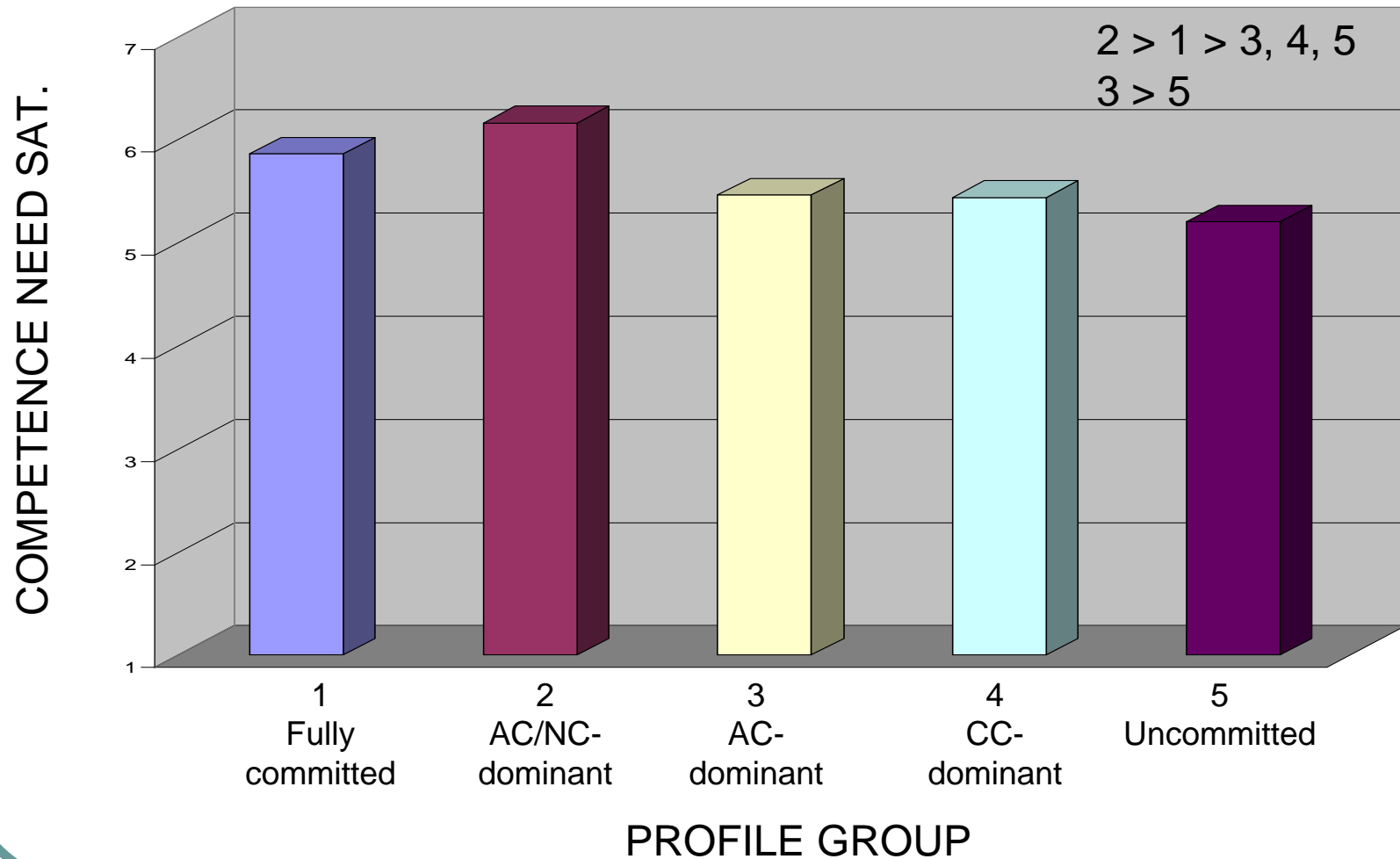
Autonomous vs. Controlled Reg.



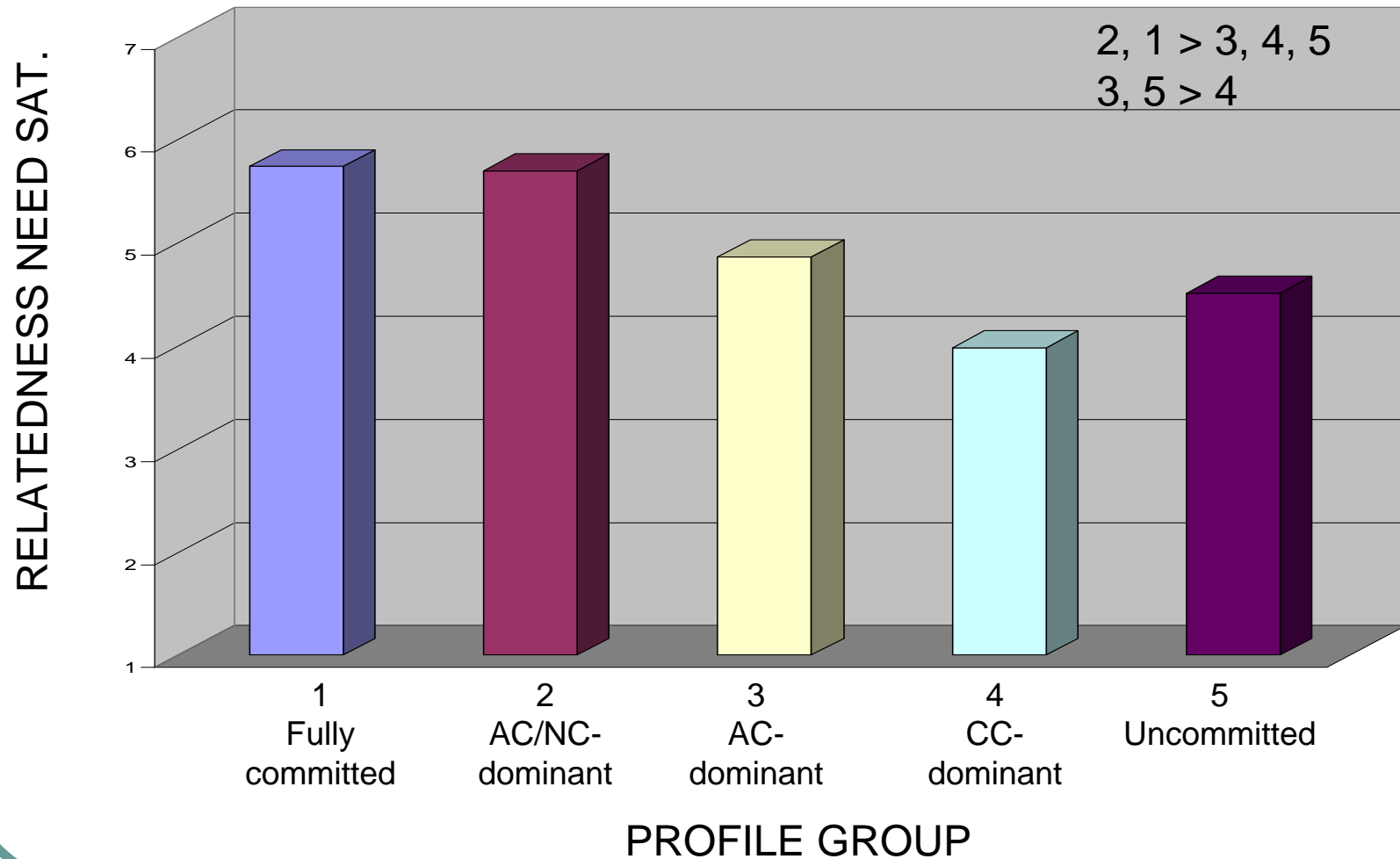
Autonomy Need Satisfaction



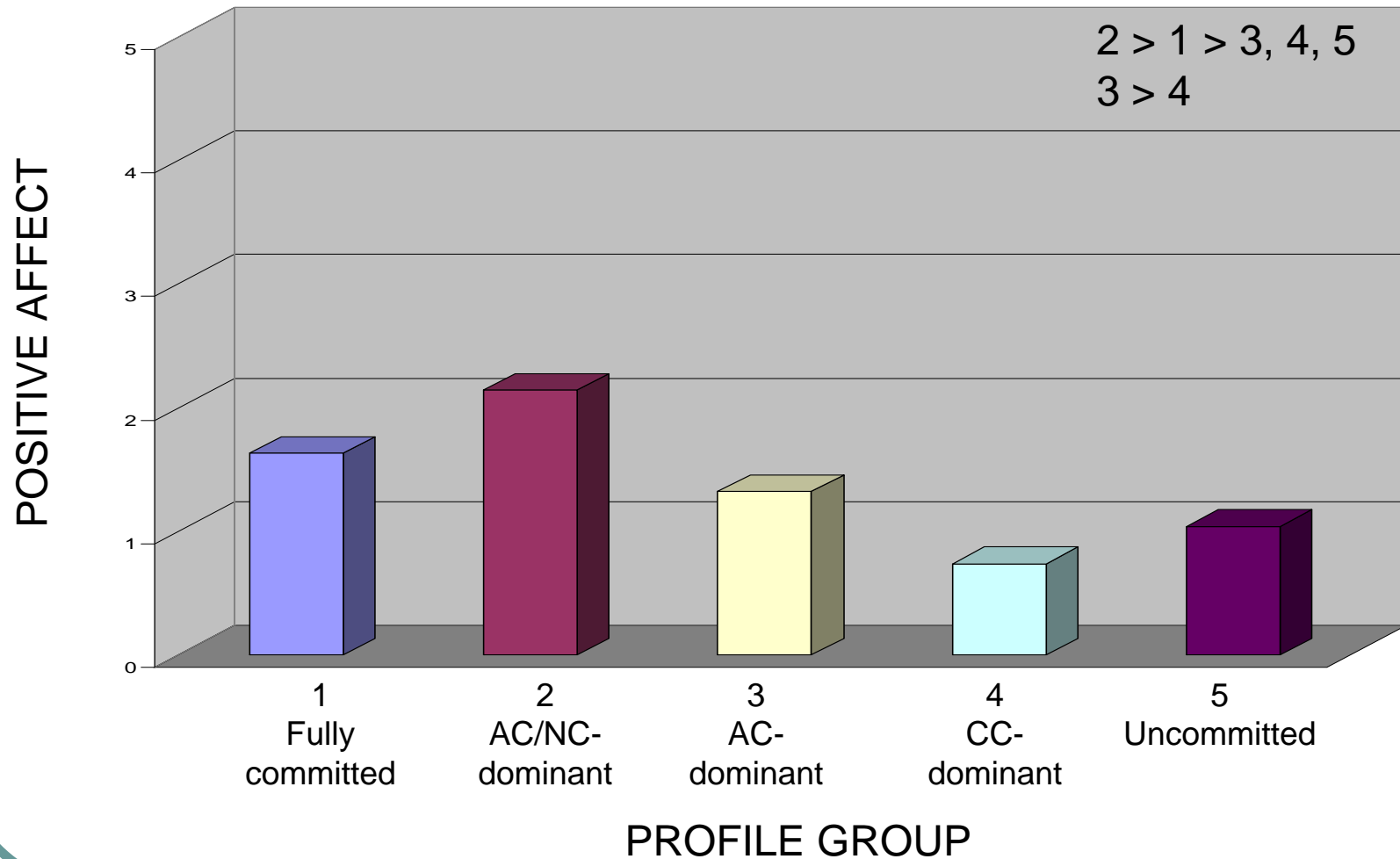
Competence Need Satisfaction



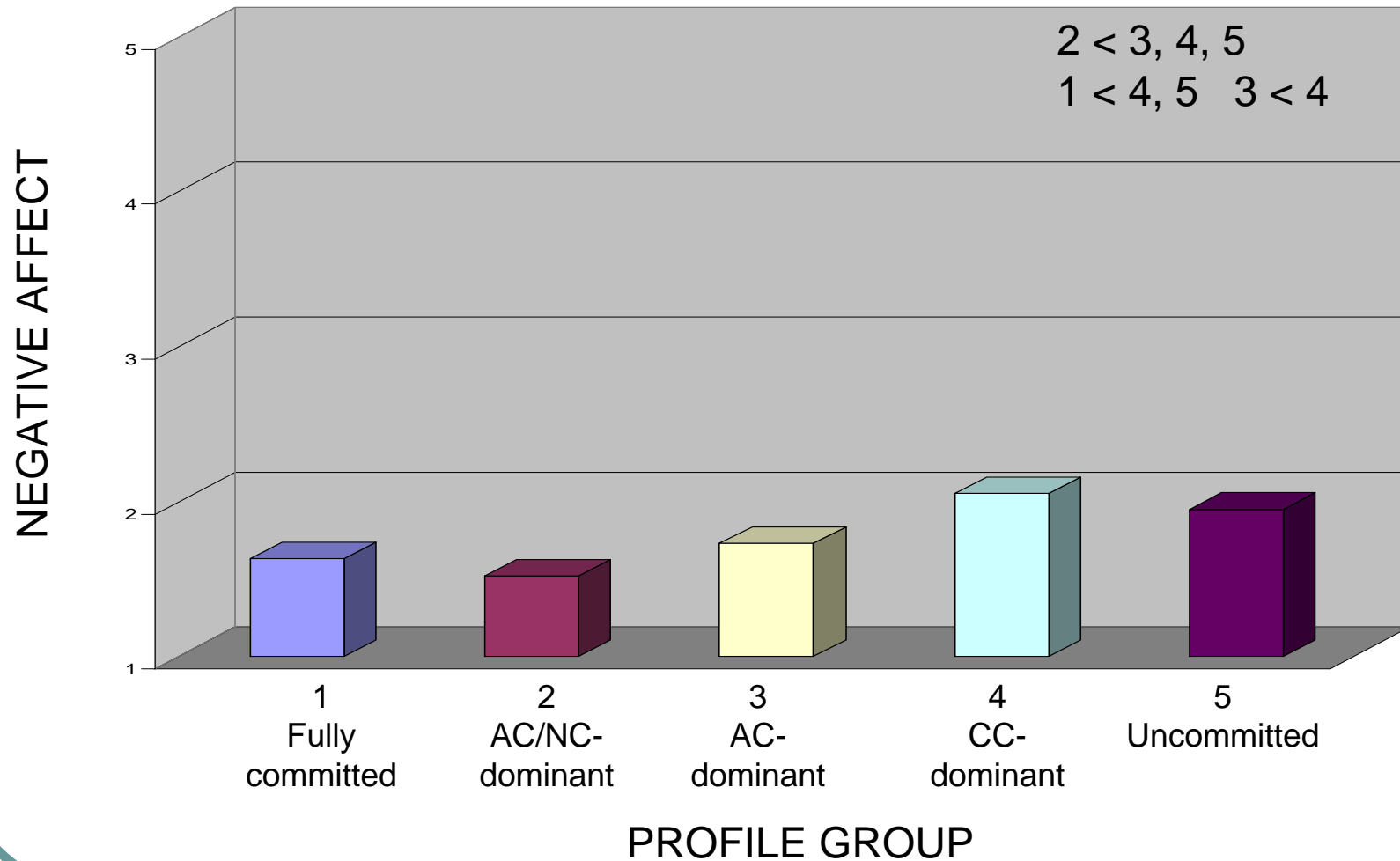
Relatedness Need Satisfaction



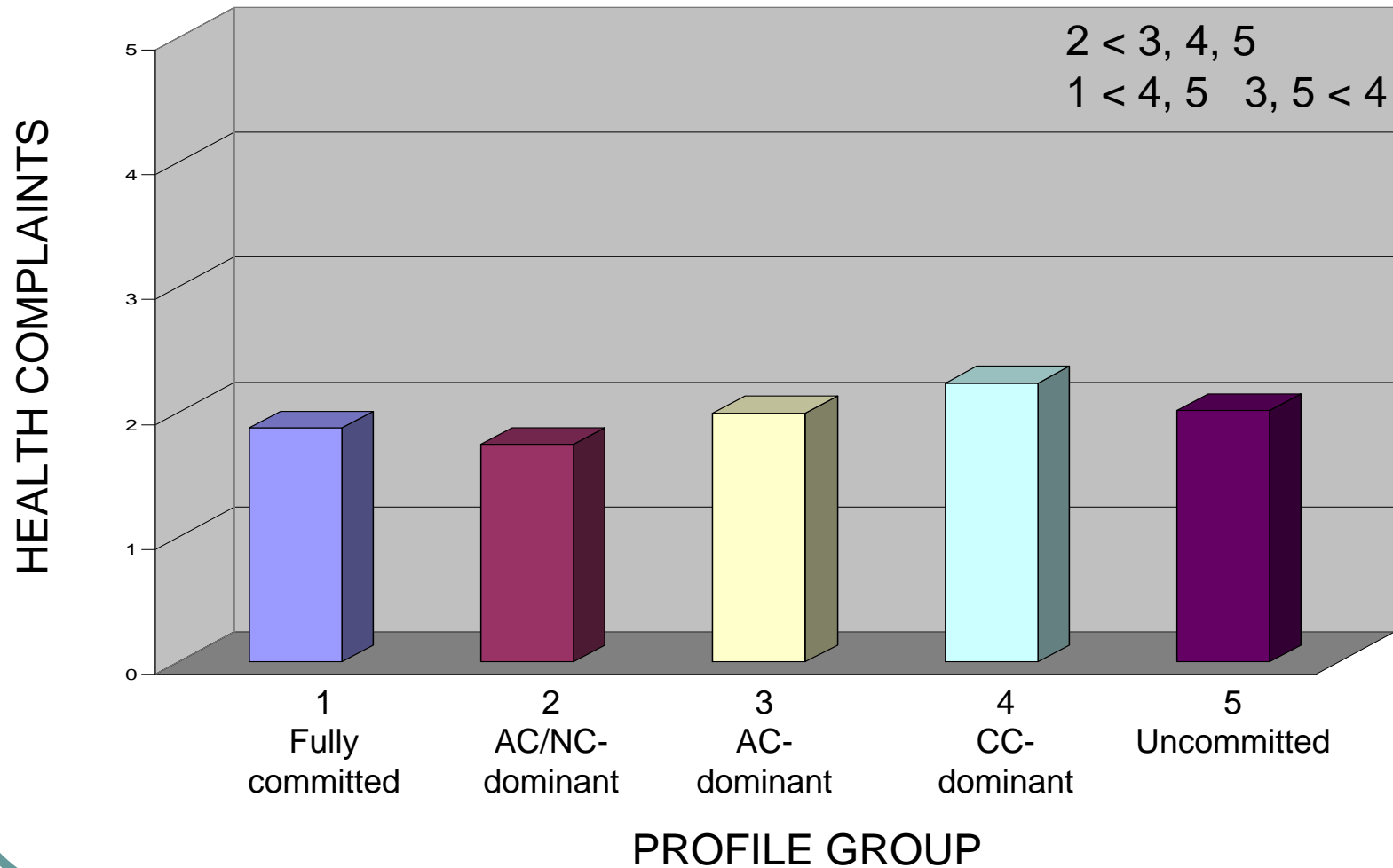
Positive Affect



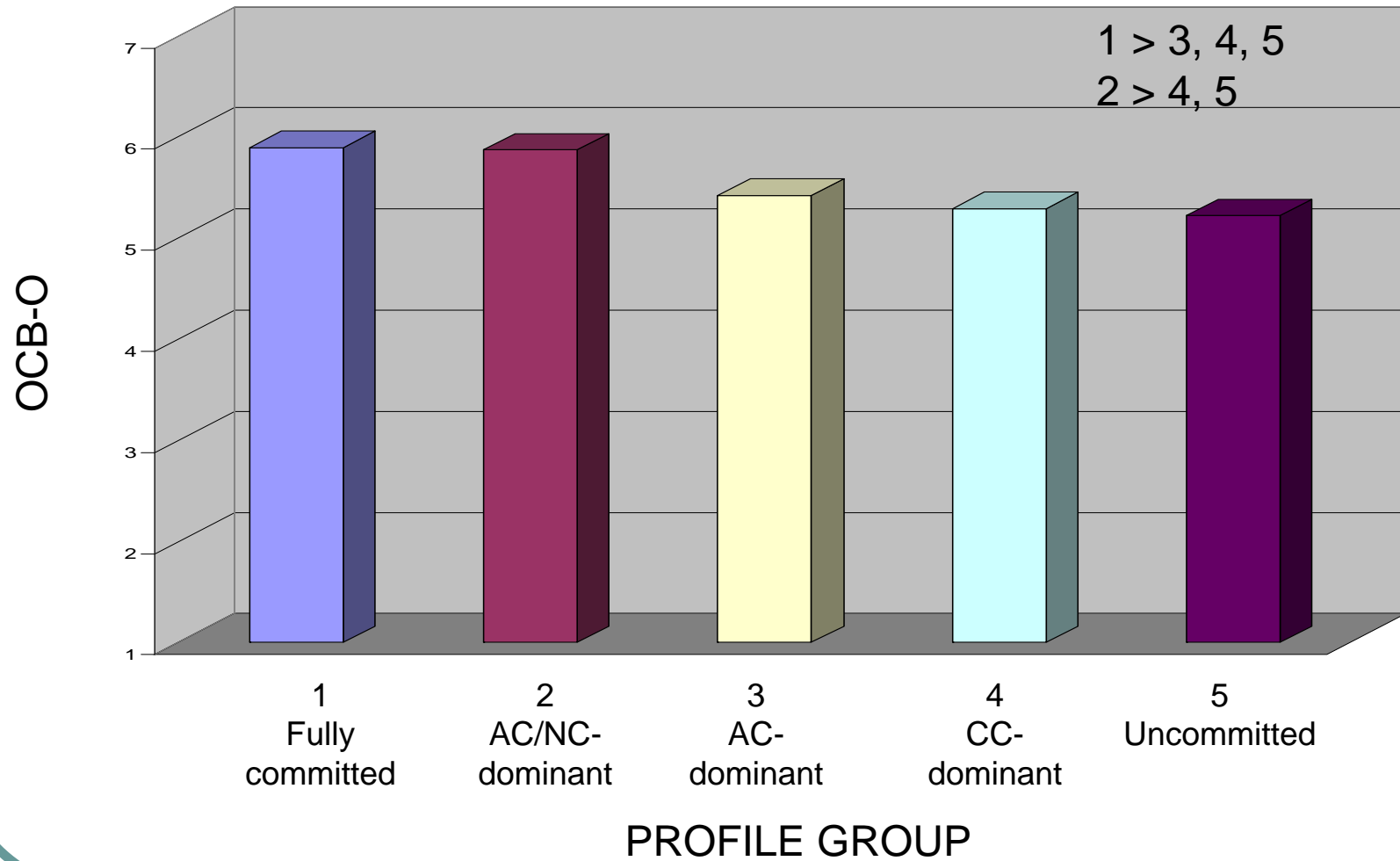
Negative Affect



General Health Complaints



OCB-O



Conclusions

- The TCM and SDT provide valuable insight into the meaning of engagement
- Engaged employees experience ...
 - strong AC/NC and weak CC to the organization
 - autonomous regulation on the job
- Engaged employees ...
 - exert discretionary effort
 - are psychologically & physically healthier

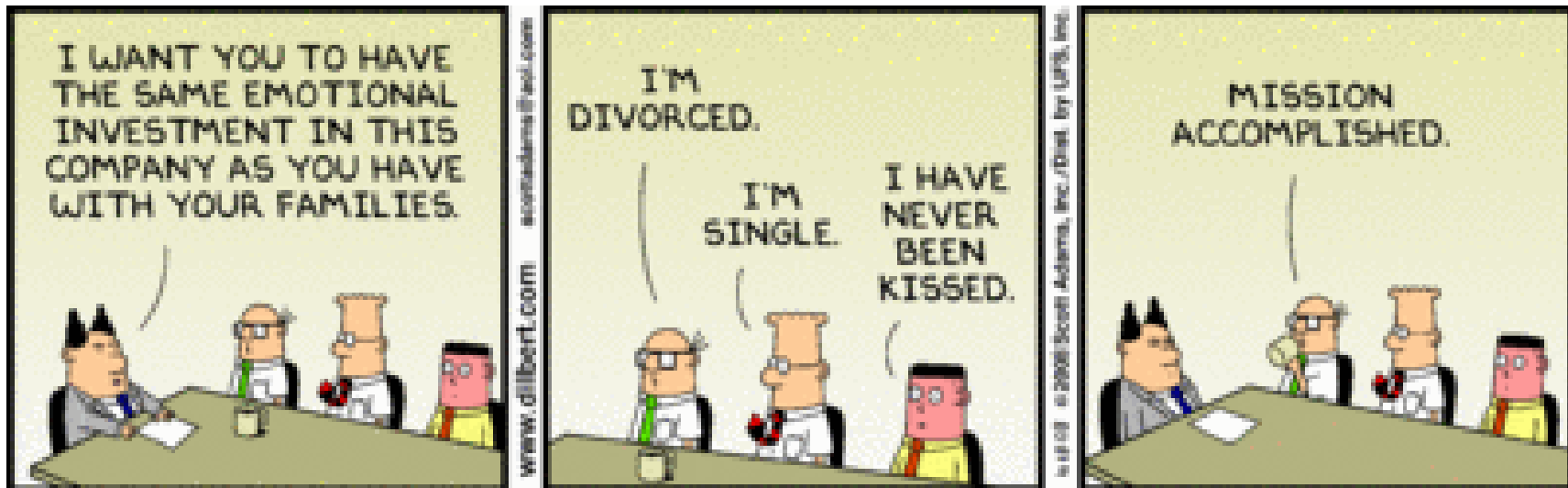
Practical Implications

How can we foster engagement?



Engagement is not easy ...

... but we can probably do better than this!



Potential Keys to Engagement

From TCM research ...

- Organizational support
- Organizational justice
- Person-organization fit
- Transformational leadership



Each of these literatures can be mined for concrete management strategies

Potential Keys to Engagement

From SDT research ...

- General autonomy orientation
- Autonomy supportive leadership
- Autonomy supportive work climate

Mediating Mechanism = Need satisfaction

Needs as a Guide for Practice

The Gallup 12-Item Measure of Engagement[®]

- know what is expected of me
- have the material and equipment I need
- opportunity to do what I do best every day
- received recognition or praise in last 7 days
- superior (or someone) cares about me
- someone at work encourages my development
- my opinion seems to count
- mission/purpose makes me feel my job is important
- associates are committed to quality work
- best friend at work
- someone talked to me about my progress in last 6 months
- opportunity to learn and grow

Adapted from Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes (JAP, 2001)



Needs as a Guide for Practice

The Gallup 12-Item Measure of Engagement[®]

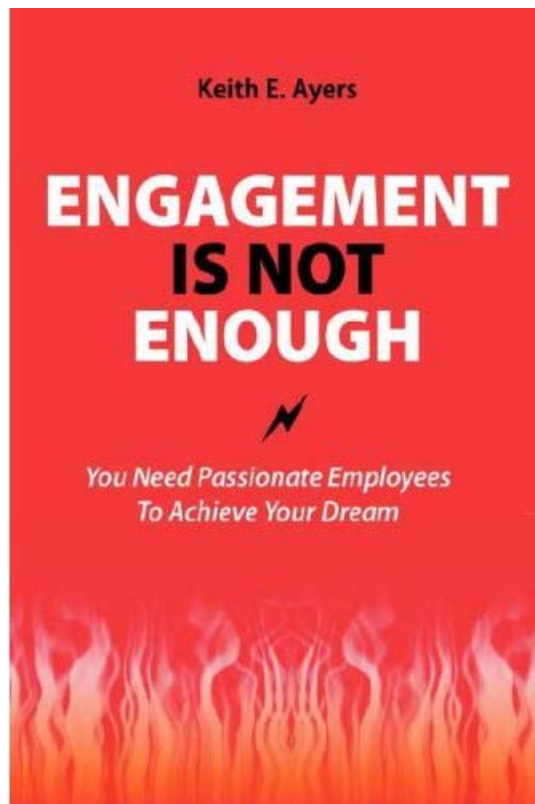
- know what is expected of me – competence
- have the material and equipment I need – competence
- opportunity to do what I do best every day – competence / autonomy
- received recognition or praise in last 7 days – relatedness / competence
- superior (or someone) cares about me – relatedness
- someone at work encourages my development – competence / relatedness
- my opinion seems to count – autonomy / competence
- mission/purpose makes me feel my job is important – autonomy
- associates are committed to quality work – autonomy / relatedness
- best friend at work – relatedness
- someone talked to me about my progress in last 6 months – competence
- opportunity to learn and grow – competence / autonomy

Adapted from Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes (JAP, 2001)



Are We Too Late?

Is engagement a fad that has passed?



See Vallerand's SDT-based Theory of Passion
(e.g., Vallerand et al., *JPSP*, 2003)

The Downside of Engagement?

Worker Dead at Desk for 5 Days

... His boss Elliot Wachiaski said "George was always the first guy in each morning and the last to leave at night, so no one found it unusual that he was in the same position all that time and didn't say anything. He was always absorbed in his work and kept much to himself."

Birmingham Sunday Mercury (7th Jan 2001)

Thank you!

For more information, contact me at ...

meyer@uwo.ca