

# THE SELF AT WORK

Fundamental Theory and  
Research

*Edited by D. Lance Ferris,  
Russell E. Johnson, and  
Constantine Sedikides*

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## SIOP Organizational Frontiers Series

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## THE SELF AT WORK

*The Self at Work* brings researchers in industrial and organizational psychology and organizational behavior together with researchers in social and personality psychology to explore how the self impacts the workplace. Covering topics such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-control, power, and identification, each chapter examines how research on the self informs and furthers understanding of organizational topics such as employee engagement, feedback-seeking, and leadership. With their combined expertise, the chapter authors consider how research on the self has influenced management research and practice (and vice-versa), limitations of applying social psychology research in the organizational realm, and future directions for organizational research on the self. This book is a valuable resource for researchers, graduate students, and professionals who are interested in how research on the self can inform industrial/organizational psychology.

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Behind the scenes, a number of people also played key roles in helping this book come together. Mo Wang encouraged Russ and Lance to consider submitting a prospectus on the topic, and conversations with Doug Brown helped inspire the idea of bringing together researchers from social psychology and industrial-organizational/organizational behavior to collaborate on chapters. Rich Klimoski was instrumental in shepherding us through the early stages of submitting and revising our prospectus, and the great feedback on our prospectus from the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Organizational Frontier Series Editorial Board helped improve the final product. Finally, on the publisher side, our collaborators at Routledge – Christina Chronister, Julie Toich, and Lauren Verity – kept us on track and on time, and were key to putting together the volume.

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## SERIES EDITOR'S FOREWORD

This volume is remarkable because it assembles a vast amount of research and insight regarding what we know (and don't know) about the nature of the "self" construct. Moreover, it does so in a way that makes it easy for the reader to really see how the self at work "works." And as it turns out, the self is indeed implicated in helping to understand much of worker behavior. As developed in the chapters of this book we learn, for example, how the nature of the self might explain why employees come to join and identify with their company, when and where they respond to leaders, or why they are or are not engaged at work. The nature of the self is also portrayed as the foundation for a better understanding of many of the problematics facing work organizations. These include such things as when and how an organization might provide feedback in a way that will make a positive impact on learning, behavior or performance, and when and where the nature of the self can produce inauthentic relationships or even help us to better "explain" and mitigate against worker substance abuse. With regard to the latter, at the time that this Forward is being written, the United States is experiencing what is being termed an "opiate overuse epidemic." This is thought to be exacerbated by a feeling of anomie on the part of so many individuals discouraged about the prospects of becoming re-employed. As you will learn from this volume, the sense of self can be a powerful force for promoting success in the workplace but it also plays a major role in undermining one's efforts to live up to the workplace-related aspirations of most Americans.

Lance Ferris, Russ Johnson and Constantine Sedikides are extremely qualified as editors. In fact, any one of them could have personally written a book on the many important topics covered in this volume. But instead they have brought their years of research and teaching experience relative to self-theory to bear in scoping out a very fine volume. They have also done us a great service

by reaching out and engaging a set of chapter authors who are similarly well qualified. In short, this is a book that should not only be read for the wisdom that it imparts but also for its potential to motivate the reader to pursue future research relative to addressing the many yet to be answered questions lying at the intersection of self-theory and workplace behavior as well.

Richard Klimoski

# 1

## THE SELF AT WORK

### An Overview

*D. Lance Ferris, Russell E. Johnson,  
and Constantine Sedikides*

Issues pertaining to the self are ubiquitous at work. Consider the case of Maggie, a senior manager at a large accounting firm who is hoping to be promoted to partner. Although the promotion comes with a pay raise, Maggie especially desires the position because of the boost it would give her self-esteem and because of the greater power and autonomy that being partner affords. For these reasons, Maggie is motivated to present an overly favorable impression of herself to the partners by seeking positive feedback about her accomplishments and by displaying visible signs of being engaged at work (e.g., working late and coming in on weekends, holding meetings with clients at the office, etc.). Or consider the case of Erlich, who is a member of a close-knit team working in a software company. The culture and leadership in this company stresses benevolence and universalism, which causes employees to see themselves as interconnected with one another. Erlich's work can sometimes be quite demanding, which leaves him feeling mentally depleted and prone to making mistakes. When mistakes occur, they hinder the performance of his team members, leaving Erlich feeling guilt and shame. To escape negative feelings about himself and his abilities, Erlich smokes marijuana in the evening. As these two examples illustrate, what people think and feel about themselves impact how they perform their jobs and interact with work colleagues. The thoughts and feelings that people have about themselves are also shaped by their jobs and interactions, and the broader work environment. The self and work are indeed intertwined, thus necessitating that industrial and organizational psychologists have an understanding of theory and research pertaining to the self.

## The Self: A Brief Historical Overview

Few concepts are as fundamental or impactful to psychology as the self. The self is implicated in a mind-bogglingly large array of concepts – a partial list provided by Baumeister (1998, p. 681) includes “self-affirmation, self-appraisal, self-as-target effect, self-awareness, self-concept, self-construal, self-deception, self-defeating behavior, self-enhancement, self-esteem, self-evaluation maintenance, self-interest, self-monitoring, self-perception, self-presentation, self-protection, self-reference, self-regulation, self-serving bias, self-verification” – to which we could add self-efficacy, core self-evaluations, self-determination, self-control, and self-conscious emotions, among others. This is an impressive catalogue, and one that grows even larger when we include concepts relevant to the self but that do not contain the word “self” (such as social comparison, narcissism, authenticity, or engagement).

Fully appreciating what the self is and what it does has historically been challenging, in part because of this sheer variety of concepts related to the self and the self's influence on so many cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioral processes. Greenwald and Pratkanis (1984) identified work by James (1890) and Allport (1943) as milestones in scholarly understanding of what the self is and what it does. In particular, James (1890, p. 291) defined the self thus:

*In its widest possible sense . . . a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account. (emphasis in original)*

Although this definition of the self may leave females, landlubbers, and the horseless feeling excluded, it nonetheless illustrates just how broad the concept of “self” can be. To simplify, James further divided this definition into what he called the four constituent elements of the self: the material self (broadly, one's physical body and possessions), the social self (broadly, the aspects of the self that are presented to others), the spiritual self (broadly, one's inner thoughts), and the pure ego (broadly, the unitary agent, thinker, knower, or observer – what some refer to as the soul). James also delineated how these constituents can inspire a variety of feelings (e.g., pride, vanity, shame, and inferiority) and motivate a variety of actions (e.g., to acquire objects, to be noticed, and to be moral), which foreshadowed future work on self-relevant emotions and motivations.

Following the publication of James' (1890) work, the self largely disappeared as a topic of serious research. During this ensuing period, as Allport (1943) noted, behaviorism took hold in psychology (with the exception of psychoanalysis' preoccupation with the ego) and cognitive concepts like the “self,” “identity,” and “esteem” fell by the wayside. Arguing for a greater focus on the self in psychology, Allport pointed out that a decisive influence on

human behavior and cognition is the involvement of the self. For example, it is altogether different when another person's clothes, relationships, or works are criticized compared to when that same criticism is leveled at our own clothes, relationships, or works. These two cases – when the self versus another person is criticized – give rise to distinct thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In terms of how the self should be conceptualized, Allport (p. 459) noted that researchers conceive of the self in eight ways:

- (1) as knower, (2) as object of knowledge, (3) as primordial selfishness, (4) as dominator, (5) as a passive organizer and rationalizer, (6) as a fighter for ends, (7) as one segregated behavioral system among others, (8) as a subjective patterning of cultural values.

In Allport's list, we see many of the topics that researchers of the self continue to examine today, such as narcissism (or the self as “primordial selfishness”), power and status (or the self as “dominator”), the moral self (or the self as “a fighter for ends”), self-regulation and -control (or the self as “a passive organizer and rationalizer”), and individualistic and collectivistic self-construals (or the self as “a subjective patterning of cultural values”).

In line with the cognitive revolution occurring in psychology at the time, Greenwald and Pratkanis' (1984) own review highlighted studies on the self and cognition, including how people remember better material that has been “touched” by the self (such as material generated by the self vs. someone else, or relevant to the self like words describing one's qualities), how people overestimate the amount of control they have over events, and how their evaluations are biased in ways that favor themselves. Greenwald and Pratkanis (p. 166) ultimately concluded that the self is not only the focus of affective evaluations, but also a “central cognitive structure, a self-concept with content that varies from person to person” and can be described as “complex, consisting of diffuse public, private, and collective facets, each providing a distinct basis for self-evaluation.”

### Three Functions of the Self

The reviews by James (1890), Allport (1943), and Greenwald and Pratkanis (1984) highlight the broad and wide-ranging impact of the self. More recently, Baumeister (1998, p. 681) argued the various self-related research findings can be organized into a tripartite view of the self's functions, proposing the self is “an entity marked by reflexive consciousness, interpersonal roles and reputation, and executive function.” This tripartite view constitutes a parsimonious way to conceptualize (and ultimately appreciate) what the self does.

First, the *reflexive consciousness* function of the self refers to humans possessing the capacity for self-awareness. The self can be both observer and



observed – or, as James (1890) put it, there is both the self-as-subject (the “I” self) and the self-as-object (the “Me” self) in a phrase such as “I can see me” (see also Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 2016; Sedikides & Gregg, 2003). The reflexive consciousness function of the self allows people to appraise themselves, to know their capabilities and form opinions about themselves, and ultimately to strive to improve and enhance ourselves. Concepts such as self-esteem and self-efficacy largely (but not exclusively)<sup>1</sup> arise from the self’s reflexive consciousness function.

Second, the *interpersonal* function of the self refers to how the self exists within interpersonal relations – individuals are mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, daughters and sons, friends and enemies, older and younger, teammates and competitors, supplicants and superiors – all depending on the interpersonal context. Moreover, the interpersonal context influences and is influenced by the self. Indeed, some authors have argued that what people perceive as the self is largely the reflection of others’ appraisals of the self (i.e., reflected appraisals, or the looking-glass or mirrored self; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934), yet the self also expends considerable effort to manage the appraisals of others. The interpersonal function of the self gives rise to concepts such as self-monitoring and impression management, as well as biases in how people perceive and evaluate others (e.g., academics and athletes evaluating others based on their CVs or sports prowess, respectively), their ability to identify with social groups, and uniquely interpersonal emotions such as guilt, embarrassment, or even anxiety during a blind date.

Finally, the *executive* function of the self refers to how the self “makes decisions, initiates actions, and in other ways exerts control over both self and environment” (Baumeister, 1998, p. 712). Put simply, the self is a doer and is not relegated to being a passive observer – if anything, the self reacts negatively to reductions in control and autonomous choices. The executive function of the self is ultimately what gives rise to motivated behavior, be it job-specific, prosocial, antisocial, or more neutral everyday behavior. It also gives rise to attempts – and failures – to exert self-control over our behavior by, for example, regulating what goals are chosen, what plans and strategies are formulated, and when and how goal-directed action is initiated and maintained. It is the executive function of the self that translates cognition, conation, and affect into observable action.

### The Self at Work

So far, we have primarily drawn upon the literature in social and personality psychology (what we refer to as *social/personality*) to discuss the self. Yet as the tripartite view makes plain, the self is intimately involved in many (if not most) aspects of one’s lives, including their work lives, where the self is particularly influential by shaping how employees perceive and understand their

environment, job tasks, colleagues, and interpersonal interactions. Employees are continuously evaluating their own work and abilities (and are in turn evaluated by others), regulating their behaviors that contribute to and influence their environment, and interacting with other employees inhabiting different social roles.

In line with this idea, some of the more explicit organizational applications of research on the self include organization-based self-esteem (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, & Dunham, 1989), workplace contingencies of self-worth (Ferris, Lian, Brown, & Morrison, 2015), self-control depletion and its effects on deviant and prosocial organizational behavior (Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016; Trougakos, Beal, Cheng, Hideg, & Zweig, 2015; Marcus & Schuler, 2004), organizational and relational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Lord & Brown, 2004), workplace identity negotiation and change (Ibarra, 1999; Swann, Johnson, & Bosson, 2009), and CEO narcissism (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007; Grijalva, Harms, Newman, Gaddis, & Fraley, 2015; Sedikides & Campbell, 2017). In some ways it is surprising that a book on the self at work has not been published previously, given the pervasive impact the self has on work and organizational phenomena. Indeed, we would argue that most of the topics that interest scholars of industrial-organizational or organizational behavior (what we refer to as *IO/OB*) stand to be influenced by the self.

Consider, for example, the topics of other volumes within SIOP’s *Organizational Frontiers* series. Many of these volumes broadly address ratings and evaluations, either of the self or others, in training and performance contexts (Ashkanasy, Bennett, & Martinko, 2016; Ellingson & Noe, 2017; Highhouse, Dalal, & Salas, 2014; Kozlowski & Salas, 2010). Here, the reflexive consciousness functions of the self become implicated, particularly because numerous studies have shown that the self holds a privileged status in memory and evaluations (Sedikides, Gaertner, & Cai, 2015; Sedikides, Green, Saunders, Skowronski, & Zengel, 2016). For example, people retrieve memories associated with the self more quickly than unrelated memories (Ross & Sicoly, 1979), they are more likely to remember something that did not happen (so-called “false alarms”) when it is consistent with their self-views (Bransford & Franks, 1971), and they are more likely to remember their successes than failures (Glickman, 1949). Similarly, they judge themselves more positively than others do, taking credit for successes and denying responsibility for failures (Ferris & Sedikides, this volume). The self is thus part and parcel of research involving ratings and evaluations.

Other *Organizational Frontiers* volumes broadly deal with groups, be they teams (Eby & Allen, 2012; Salas, Goodwin, & Burke, 2009), demographic sections (Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Finkelstein, Truxillo, Fraccaroli, & Kanfer, 2015), or political coalitions (Ferris & Treadway, 2012). Being in a group understandably introduces the interpersonal functions of the self, and decades of research have been devoted to the study of the self in groups. This research

includes identification with groups (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2001), how certain emotions uniquely emerge from group situations (Bohns & Flynn, 2013; Tracy & Robins, 2004), and how the self reacts to inclusion and exclusion from groups in prosocial and antisocial ways, with people engaging in risky or even unethical behavior to gain inclusion (Leary, Tchividjian, & Kraxberger, 1994; Thau, Derfler-Rozin, Pitesa, Mitchell, & Pillutia, 2015). In particular, self-referenced cognitions and processes are prompted by various forms of interpersonal mistreatment (e.g., incivility, unfairness, ostracism, etc.), which give rise to behaviors that protect the self and create psychological separation from the perpetrator (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Ferris, Chen, & Lim, 2017; Johnson & Lord, 2010; Rosen, Koopman, Gabriel-Rossetti, & Johnson, 2016). Given that groups are aggregates of individual selves, the self is an integral concept in understanding groups and emergent properties and processes in groups.

Still other Organizational Frontiers volumes broadly address self-regulation, motivation, affect, and self-improvement (Ellingson & Noe, 2017; Hofmann & Frese, 2011; Kanter, Chen, & Pritchard, 2008; Lord, Klimoski, & Kanfer, 2002). Naturally, such work implicates the executive function of the self. Prior research has highlighted the self's relevance for self-regulation and motivation, including how different types of motivation and emotional reactions emerge when the self's basic needs for autonomy, competence, and belongingness are satisfied or thwarted (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Vallerand, 1997), as well as work on self-enhancement and power (Lammers, Stoker, Rink, & Galinsky, 2016). Emotional reactions at work, in particular, are driven by the self-relevance of organizational features and events (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). The self's role is also implicated in its limited ability to engage in self-control before becoming depleted (Johnson, Muraven, Donaldson, & Lin, this volume; Muraven, Tice, & Baumeister, 1998).

Finally, a recent Organizational Frontiers volume addressed nepotism, or the "psychological and social processes associated with observed phenomena with respect to family membership (broadly defined) in and around organizations" (Jones, 2012, p. 2). Suffice to say, we can think of no more relevant topic for the self than a topic around people who are copies of their genes. Certainly, nepotism offers unique opportunities to bask in the reflected glories of family members – or to be shamed by their failures – while also affording opportunities to be envious of close others (both in a genetic and relationship sense).

We do not claim that these prior Organizational Frontiers volumes or their associated literatures have overlooked the role of the self. Reviewers are well aware of the limitations of self-generated ratings of performance and are often more than happy to point these out. Rather, our aim is to raise awareness about just how impactful the self is for organizational phenomena. We are hard-pressed to find any organizational topic where a knowledge of the self's reflexive, interpersonal, or executive functions would fail to yield interesting insights and testable hypotheses. Of course, it is not possible to provide

exhaustive coverage of all IO/OB topics that intersect with the self, thus some interesting topics unfortunately did not make it into this volume, such as self-improvement, the moral self, and authenticity, among others. Nevertheless, we are hopeful (one might even say self-assured!) that the included topics will be of interest to readers who are curious to learn more about the self.

## Origin and Organization of This Book

To this point, we have outlined how the historical roots of the self largely lie in the social/personality domain, while also arguing the self has crucial implications for the IO/OB domain. As such, for this latest volume of SIOP's Organizational Frontiers series, we decided to bring together leading IO/OB and social/personality researchers with overlapping interests on the self to co-author chapters (excluding the Applications section, detailed below). For many of our chapter authors, these collaborations were entirely new, and thus entailed all the usual risks of working with someone they had not partnered with before. We were ecstatic that so many luminaries in our field were willing to take this leap into the unknown with us!

Our aim in bringing together this diverse group of authors to work together on specific self-related topics was to foster conversations between IO/OB and social/personality authors across a range of areas. We asked them to consider, among other things, what the key theoretical tenets and takeaways are for the focal topic, how the topic has been used in the IO/OB literature, whether "translation" issues occurred between the social/personality literature and IO/OB's use of that literature, what new insights IO/OB has given back to the social/personality literature, what burning issues or problems remain in the literature, and (relatedly) where IO/OB and social/personality research on the topic can go. Given that it was impossible to predict what would happen when they began working together, we also encouraged authors to follow whatever directions they found most interesting. We hope that the resulting chapters are interesting and useful for both IO/OB and social/personality researchers, in terms of understanding how IO/OB has used and contributed to the literature on the self as well as for understanding the roots of this work.

This book is organized into three sections. The first section, Fundamental Concepts and Theories, covers topics that represent building blocks in the literature on the self. These topics are fundamental in the sense that they represent major concepts and theories that are frequently referenced in research articles (even when the self may not be the specific focus of the articles). The topics surveyed in these chapters can therefore be viewed as having attained prominent (or fundamental) status within both social psychology and management research. These concepts and theories range from self-efficacy to self-determination to social power, all of which are intertwined with the concept of the self. The first two chapters cover two of the most commonly



studied "self" topics in the IO/OB and social/personality literatures. First, Vancouver, Alicka, and Halper (Chapter 2) clarify the meaning and function of self-efficacy in the opening chapter. They also draw attention to critical theoretical insights and challenges in the self-efficacy literature (e.g., the causal relation between self-efficacy and behavior) and discuss untapped areas of inquiry for future research. In the next chapter, Brown and Zeigler-Hill (Chapter 3) tackle research on intrapersonal and subjective evaluations of one's worth and value, namely self-esteem. The authors' coverage spans numerous perspectives (e.g., trait vs. state and explicit vs. implicit self-esteem), controversies (e.g., is self-esteem a predictor or outcome of performance? Is extreme self-esteem beneficial or harmful?), and functions of self-esteem (e.g., as a gauge of social status and as a source of meaning).

The attention of the next two chapters shifts to conceptualizations of the self vis-à-vis other people and groups. van Knippenberg and Hogg (Chapter 4) examine how employees come to define themselves as part of work groups based on the defining characteristics they share with other members. As reviewed in their chapter, these social identification processes have key implications for the goals and values that employees hold, the types of exchange relationships they develop with others, how employees respond to organizational change efforts, and who are endorsed as group leaders. Ferris and Sedikides (Chapter 5) explore the basic motive of self-enhancement, which involves the desire for other people to view the self in a favorable light. This motive can lead employees to take credit for successes and attribute failures to external causes, to solicit positive feedback from others, or to make downward social comparisons, especially for defining characteristics of the self.

The two chapters that follow cover topics that pertain in particular to aspects of self-regulation, which refers to the process of exercising self-control over cognition, affect, and behavior in order to achieve one's goals. Johnson, Muraven, Donaldson, and Lin (Chapter 6) review theory and research on self-control, and how it appears to operate as a limited resource. After engaging in demanding activities that require high amounts of self-control (e.g., suppressing self-interest, multi-tasking), employees may become mentally fatigued and, as a result, show poorer task performance, and exhibit less cooperative and more destructive interpersonal behaviors. Diefendorff, Houlfort, Vallerand, and Krantz (Chapter 7) summarize social/personality and IO/OB research on Self-Determination Theory, which stresses the importance of pursuing goals that enable individuals to satisfy basic psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Pursuing such goals requires less self-control on the part of employees, because self-concordant activities are intrinsically motivating and they foster greater well-being.

The final two chapters in this section review self-referenced emotions and forms of power. Schauberg, Flynn, and Tracy (Chapter 8) discuss the role of two social emotions – guilt and shame – that arise from evaluating the self

from the perspective of others. These authors highlight the need to distinguish between discrete emotions at work because guilt and shame trigger unique types of behavior (e.g., reconciliatory and hostile behaviors, respectively). Moreover, how individuals think and behave towards others at work not only depends on their emotional states but also on the extent to which they have control over valued resources, as made clear in Schaefer, Lee, Galinsky, and Thau's review of social power (Chapter 9). The authors provide detailed coverage of the topic, ranging from methodological issues to power dynamics over time and special considerations at different levels (i.e., individual, interpersonal, and organizational).

After presenting these fundamental concepts and theories associated with the self, the second section of the book, titled Integrative Themes, covers topics that build on one or more of the concepts and theories from the first section. This section illustrates how research on culture, impression management, and escaping the self have taken fundamental concepts of the self and incorporated them into their own research areas. Wheeler, Gelfand, Hong, and Chiu (Chapter 10) discuss how culture shapes the self, particularly the relative prominence that different self-construals hold. These differences in self-construal, in particular, can have marked effects on how individuals achieve self-enhancement or how they react to displays of self-conscious emotions such as shame. Similarly, Leary and Bolino (Chapter 11) discuss the various tactics individuals use to construct positive impressions of themselves to others. Such tactics typically are motivated by a desire for self-enhancement and involve striving towards a desired identity. Finally, Mohr, Haverly, Froidevaux, and Wang (Chapter 12) discuss how negative self-evaluations and self-conscious emotions can lead to behaviors such as alcohol and drug misuse – behaviors that serve as means to escape self-awareness.

The third section of the book, Applications to Organizational Concepts, departs from the prior two sections' pairing of IO/OB and social/personality co-authors and instead invites prominent IO/OB researchers to consider the application of research on the self to topics that are particularly apposite and popular in the IO/OB literature: feedback seeking, engagement, and leadership. Ansel, Strauss, and Lievens (Chapter 13) delve into how self-enhancement and self-improvement strivings influence how individuals seek and react to feedback, as well as the role that possible future selves play in emphasizing self-enhancement or self-improvement strivings. Sonnentag and Fay (Chapter 14) review the role of elements of the reflexive and executive self in the engagement process at work, as well as possible reciprocal influences between the self and engagement at work. Finally, Lord and Chui (Chapter 15) build on recent work that explores leadership in terms of dynamic relationships among self-based concepts (e.g., self-schemas and -identities) and the effects of these concepts on behavior. Specifically, the authors discuss how dual process models and neuroscience perspectives can provide a dynamic model of leadership processes, focusing in particular on the activation of individual and social identities over time.



In closing, our hope is that by highlighting the diverse research areas associated with the self this latest volume in the SIOP Organizational Frontiers Series will increase awareness of the key role the self plays in organizational research. The self is an exceptionally broad and multifaceted topic, and we believe that a greater appreciation of it can produce generative insights for many organizational phenomena. These insights can be enriched by greater synergy between IO/OB and social/personality researchers.

## Note

- 1 Consider for example, the concept of self-efficacy (see Chapter 2 by Vancouver, Alicke, & Halper). As a perception of one's own capabilities to complete a task, self-efficacy represents a function of the reflexive self. At the same time, self-efficacy is interpersonal in nature, in that it can be positively or negatively influenced by social comparisons, or even improved by observing role models engage in tasks (e.g., via social learning processes; Bandura, 1997). Thus, self-efficacy also arises from interpersonal functions of the self. Finally, perception of one's own capabilities influences the behaviors individuals engage in—i.e., the executive functioning of the self (Vancouver, Thompson, & Williams, 2001), and these behaviors are in turn reflected upon and incorporated into self-perceptions. In this manner, self-efficacy arises from and is involved with all three self-functions. This is consistent with Baumeister's (1998) view that, although the tripartite conceptualization outlines the functions of the self, the functions are not independent from one another. As a result, many self-related concepts may not align in a one-to-one fashion with a specific function but rather emerge from the interplay between the three self-functions.

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