

REFRAMING ANXIETY AS EXCITEMENT IN JOB SEEKERS:
A WITHIN-PERSON FIELD EXPERIMENT

by

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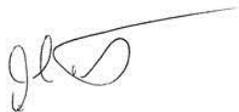
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Abstract

While job seeker's anxiety may be adaptive (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021), it may also undermine individual's weekly experiences of self-efficacy (e.g., Bandura, 1997), inhibiting job search behaviors. Prior scholarship (Brooks, 2014) finds that individuals who reappraise anxiety as excitement improve their performance outcomes and mitigate the negative effects of anxiety. Drawing from the social cognitive theory of self-regulatory behavior (Bandura, 1997; 2001) and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), I conducted a weekly emotion reappraisal intervention reframing job seeker's job search anxiety as job search excitement. Results of the field experiment indicated that the intervention was positively related to feelings of excitement about the forthcoming week of job seeking. Further, these feelings of excitement were positively related to both creative job search and networking self-efficacy. At the end of the week, job seekers who had done the intervention and experienced excitement and creative and networking self-efficacy related to their job search reported engaging in focused job search effort as well as effort towards finding their dream job. As such, this intervention provides a promising avenue for improving weekly job search experiences.

Keywords: *job search; excitement; anxiety; intervention; within-person field experiment*

Introduction

“I am starting anxiety medication because I worry so much about not finding a job. I apply everywhere, nobody wants me. It is very bad for my self-confidence and it makes me sad that nobody gives me a chance.”

– Graduating Senior in Business Management and Entrepreneurship

“When reading job descriptions, I find it difficult to even begin an application because of the anxiousness that I wouldn't be a good fit.”

– Graduating Senior in Accounting

When it comes to finding employment, the stakes and competition are likely to be higher than ever. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), there are approximately 1.6 unemployed individuals for every available job opening, with 12,947,000 people currently unemployed; these individuals include job losers, job leavers, re-entrants to the labor market (e.g., mothers who took time off and are now returning to the workforce), and—pertinent to the current investigation—new labor market entrants (e.g., graduating college students; Boswell et al., 2012). Because of the competitive nature of finding a job, theoretically and practically the job search represents a stressful endeavor, marked by substantial uncertainty as job seekers compete with other individuals to find satisfactory employment (Barber et al., 1994; Boswell et al., 2012; Froidevaux, et al., 2020; van Hooft et al., 2020; Wanberg et al., 2005). In line with this, the job search process as described by organizational scholars is characterized by negative emotional experiences including anxiety and feelings of distress (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; Melloy et al., 2018; Saks & Ashforth, 2000; Song et al., 2009; Wanberg et al., 2010).

Due to the unpleasantness of job seeking, job search scholars have long recognized, and sought to understand, the role of affective experiences in the job search, studying the effects of not just negative affect, but positive affect as well (Barber et al., 1994; Borgen & Amundson, 1987; da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; van Hooft et al., 2020; Vuori & Vinokur, 2005; Wanberg et

al., 2010). Understanding emotions during the job search is critical, as emotions play an important role in job search self-regulatory processes (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Melloy et al., 2018; Shah & Gardner, 2008; van Hooft et al., 2020; van Hooft et al., 2013). The self-regulatory perspective on job seeking emphasizes individual engagement in self-regulatory acts (i.e., applying for jobs, networking, revising résumés) that enable job seekers to begin and sustain job search behaviors, preserve motivation, concentrate on the job search, and *manage or control unpleasant moods and emotions* that may occur (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; van Hooft et al., 2020; van Hooft et al., 2013). For example, Wanberg and colleagues (1999) showed that emotion control—operationalized as job seekers’ skill in managing anxiety, worry, fear, and apprehension—positively associated with job search self-efficacy, which aided job seekers in dealing with setbacks and helped mitigate self-defeating cognitions while job seeking.

While managing moods and emotions is an important component of job seekers’ self-regulation, the experience of both negative and positive emotions associated with job seeking may be beneficial to job seekers’ search efforts depending upon the theoretical framework that is evoked. For instance, drawing from control theory and affect-as-information theory (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Carver & Scheier, 1999; Carver & Scheier, 2012), job search scholars have argued that negative emotions signal a discrepancy between job seekers’ current state of job seeking and their desired state of employment, that in turn promotes increased job search effort (da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; Gabriel et al., 2021), though negative emotions are generally unpleasant for individuals to experience (Chawla, 2020). Conversely, job search scholars have also drawn from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1997; Bandura, 1999), and from broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), to highlight that it is positive emotions during the job search that help job seekers to develop social and cognitive resources (e.g., self-

efficacy) that facilitate engagement during the job search and help job seekers remain energized despite the stress associated with job seeking (Côté et al., 2005; Turban et al., 2013).

Importantly, combining the perspectives outlined above would suggest that one affective state may be equally as beneficial as another, such that either positive or negative emotions during the job search should be functionally beneficial for job seekers. However, despite the importance and prevalence of research on generalized negative and positive affect in the job search (da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; van Hooft et al., 2020; Wanberg et al., 1999), this work neglects the potentially detrimental effects of discrete negative emotions during the job search by generally framing it as adaptive and functional. Of particular interest is job search anxiety given the pervasiveness of this emotion for job seekers (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; Saks & Ashforth, 2000), with literature outside the job search indicating that discrete affective states of anxiety may be problematic for individual performance and well-being (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Specifically, anxiety—a negative affective state exemplified by uncertainty, a lack of control, and high arousal—when experienced shortly before or during a task can diminish cognition and performance, in particular for non-experts (e.g., Brooks, 2014; Eysenck & Calvo, 1992). As new labor market entrants are going through their first search for full-time employment (Boswell et al., 2012), this suggests that anxiety could be potentially harmful. Although anxiety may increase motivation (e.g., Han et al., 2007; Ragnathan & Pham, 1999), state levels of anxiety have been linked to lowered self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), a concern given the importance of self-efficacy for job search success (e.g., Guan et al., 2013; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014; Saks et al., 2015). Highlighting further the duality of state levels of anxiety, recent work by Gabriel et al. (2021) found that although anxiety during the job search can be adaptive in promoting problem-solving pondering and different forms of

effort, it also carries detrimental effects in the form of affect-focused rumination (see also Calderwood et al., 2018). Of course, anxiety is linked to reduced well-being, reinforcing that although anxiety may carry motivational benefits, it can be undermining to individual welfare (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018), particularly in high stakes situations (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004).

Aligning with social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001; 2012), as well as empirical work that highlights the benefits of positive affect and the potential detriments of negative affect, is the broaden and build theory of positive emotions developed by Fredrickson (2001; 2004; 2013). This theory proposes that positive affective states facilitate approach behavior by functioning as internal signals, such that discrete positive emotions build personal resources (e.g., self-efficacy) and broaden thought-action capabilities (Fredrickson, 2001). These resources and capabilities are considered durable, such that a positive affective state results in the developments of resources and capabilities that may be drawn on even after the positive affective state passes (Fredrickson, 2001). As such, Fredrickson (2012) highlights the importance of positive affective states for increasing individual resilience, and important factor when considering that job seekers must draw upon personal resources to direct effort to the job search over days, weeks, and months. Therefore, the theoretical paradigms I evoke in this dissertation are supportive of the importance of states of positive affect during the job search, and critical of the theoretical perspective put forth by control theory regarding the benefits of negative affect during the job search.

When thinking about anxiety, what makes this affective state interesting theoretically and practically is that it has an arousal-based counterpart that may similarly drive effort and cognitions, without the well-being and performance costs. Specifically, excitement—a positively-valenced affective state similar to anxiety in that it is characterized by high arousal—can also drive motivation by promoting a focus on the possibility of positive outcomes stemming

from self-regulatory events (Brooks, 2014; Fredrickson, 2001; Watson et al., 1988). While anxiety is characterized by negative appraisals of a future event (e.g., unemployment post-graduation), excitement is characterized by positive appraisals of the future (e.g., finding one's ideal position) that are likely to affect subsequent cognitions (Brooks, 2014). Thus, although both of these affective states have similar motivational underpinnings arising from the appraisal of an unknown future, it is likely to be the case that individuals, or job seekers more specifically, who experience excitement versus anxiety exhibit improved performance (Jamieson et al., 2010), and do so in a manner that can preserve their well-being (Oishi et al., 2003). Individuals who feel optimistic and excited about the future tend to experience increased self-efficacy (Cozzarelli, 1993) and reduced distress (Carver et al., 1993) that may promote active coping (versus avoidant coping) processes (Scheier et al., 2001). These differences in the outcomes of anxiety versus excitement are likely to affect critical job seeker cognitions and behaviors (Gabriel et al., 2021). Indeed, combining the perspectives put forth in social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997; 2001; 2012) and the broaden and build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001; 2013), I introduce excitement as a critical affective state for job seekers that may improve perceptions of self-efficacy, that in turn promote self-regulatory job search effort. Excitement during the job search is likely to heighten appraisals of the job search as important and requiring effort and attention as individuals experience a greater perception of the possibilities afforded by job searching (e.g., new employment) (Fredrickson, 2000; Izzard 1977). Thus, excitement—through increased personal resources and enhanced cognitions (Fredrickson, 2000; 2001)—should stimulate job seekers' exploration (i.e., job searching). This perspective stands in sharp contrast to control theory, which posits that an increase in positive affect during the job search would result in a decrease in effort, or coasting (i.e., maintenance of the current level of effort).

Given the distressing nature of the job search experience, helping job seekers manage their emotions during the job search by increasing experiences of excitement may be important in relation to improving job seeker outcomes, particularly during current constrained labor market conditions in which job seekers need to think creatively about job prospects (e.g., Howington, 2018) and pursue opportunities within their networks (e.g., Kaufman, 2011). Yet, job search scholars have not addressed whether helping individuals reappraise their anxiety into a similarly high arousal state like excitement may improve their job search performance. While several job search interventions have addressed managing the anxiety and distress of job seekers indirectly by improving coping abilities via resilience against setbacks (e.g., Vinokur & Schul, 1997), coping with unemployment (e.g., Spera et al., 1994), or enlisting social support (Reynolds et al., 2010), little research has addressed directly changing (i.e., via reappraisal) experiences of anxiety into excitement to harness the self-regulatory benefits of positive emotions.

Indeed, a limitation of job search interventions to date is that reducing anxiety is a secondary benefit of the intervention, such that feelings of anxiety and/or distress associated with job seeking are not reduced directly, but rather the interventions intend to reduce the amount of time spent job seeking by increasing search behavior or resiliency against setbacks that may (or may not) actually result in reduced anxiety. Further, to my knowledge, to date no research has considered how to promote positive affective states, including excitement, in job seekers or considered the benefits of promoting excitement in regards to both well-being and self-regulatory behavior within the job search context. As such, it is unclear whether intervention-based job search scholarship is attending to job seekers' emotions. Highlighting this discrepancy, Reynolds et al. (2010) noted that the primary purpose of their intervention was to enhance job search skills, in addition to noting that the intervention was likely to enhance job seekers' positive attitudes

and problem-solving that could reduce negative thinking. Despite this statement, the intervention was minimally effective in mitigating job seeker's depressive symptoms associated with unemployment, and anxiety was not directly addressed. The lack of findings surrounding the effects of interventions on affect may also be due the fact that interventions tend to focus on macro job search factors (e.g., improving overall self-efficacy and self-presentation; Koen et al., 2012; Reynolds et al. 2010) and neglect the variability of affective experiences for job seekers week-to-week (da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; Gabriel et al., 2021; Wanberg et al., 2012). As such, a within-person intervention for job seeker's affective states is warranted.

In this dissertation, I argue that the weekly pursuit of shifting negative emotions (anxiety) to positive emotions (excitement) during the job search is important, as Liu, Huang, et al. (2014) noted in their meta-analysis of the job search intervention literature that positive emotions are functional indicators of job search quality, as positive emotions indicate to job seekers that their search is going well. However, prior intervention work has not determined how to promote positive emotional states during job seeking in an effective, theoretically-derived manner (Liu, Huang, et al. 2014). One exception to this is an experimental intervention by Brown et al. (2010) who did a self-management and verbal self-guidance intervention focused on increasing self-efficacy and reducing anxiety. Their intervention consisted of training individuals on key job search behaviors, goal setting, and identifying areas where they engaged in negative self-talk in order to convert these negative self-statements to positive self-statements. These experiments by Brown et al. (2010) represent a promising start, as verbal self-guidance in a one-off experimental setting promoted decreased anxiety and increased self-efficacy that improved subsequent mock-interview performance. However, this study had several limitations. Most critically, the experiments were one-time interventions in a laboratory context. Given that the job search tends

to extend over a long period of time (i.e., weeks to months; da Motta Veiga et al., 2018), a one-time intervention may not be sufficient to facilitate job seekers reaping the benefits of improved job seeking affect, cognitions, behavior, and outcomes. Further, Brown and colleagues (2010) did not address changes in behavior (i.e., changes in types of job search effort) that may occur as a result of the intervention. Finally, while their experiment reduced anxiety, it did not address whether or not positive affect (e.g., excitement) increased as a result of the intervention, nor if any of their results were driven by an increase associated with positive affective states, versus reduced negative affect.

In order to theoretically and practically extend the job search literature broadly, and the literature on job search interventions specifically, this dissertation develops a job search intervention that shifts job seekers' anxiety to excitement, promoting an emotional reappraisal that is likely to be critical to two understudied forms of self-efficacy during the job search—*creative job search self-efficacy* and *networking self-efficacy*. Creative job search self-efficacy represents “the belief one has the ability to produce creative outcomes [in the job search]” (Tierney & Farmer, 2002, p. 1138). My intervention should be beneficial for creative job search self-efficacy, as prior work on affective shifts has noted that individuals who experience a negative affective state (e.g., job search anxiety) and then experience a simultaneous increase in positive affect (e.g., increased job search excitement) and decrease in negative affect (e.g., decreased job search anxiety) experience higher levels of creativity (Bledow et al., 2013). Although creative job search self-efficacy has not been studied to date in the job search literature, I surmise that for new labor market entrants entering an unpredictable labor market, thinking broadly and creatively about their search is likely to afford them unique, untapped opportunities to maximize their search success. In addition to influencing creative job search

self-efficacy, negative emotions associated with the job search may inhibit individual's desire to proactively enhance their networks and may reduce their ability to interact amiably with others, both of which are key factors in networking (Anand & Conger, 2007). By shifting job seekers' emotional states from anxious to excited, job seekers' excitement is likely to signal to them that they are in a hospitable environment, enhancing their confidence in being sociable (Fredrickson, 2001; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Thus, my intervention should improve networking self-efficacy, conceptualized as a weekly assessment of job seekers' ability to engage in networking activities (e.g., speaking with friends and family about career opportunities, job fairs; Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020).

In turn, these states of creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy should positively influence the types of job search effort job seeker's engage in. Specifically, job seekers who experience enhanced creative self-efficacy should be more likely to engage in *exploratory job search effort*, directing their effort towards fully exploring their job search options, and not narrowing in or limiting the scope of their search (e.g., approaching their search creatively and with an open mind; Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Stevens & Beach, 1996; Stevens & Turban, 2001). Conversely, given their belief that they can take a creative approach to job seeking, I posit that those who experience creative self-efficacy may actually be *less* likely to engage in *focused job search effort* that narrows the scope of their job search to find a very specific form of employment (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Koen et al., 2010). Finally, those with an experience of enhanced creative self-efficacy may also engage in more *haphazard job search effort*, as they may feel more comfortable experimenting with different job search tactics in a hit-or-miss manner and will look for employment that may or may not be related to their education and prior work experience (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Koen et al., 2010). Indeed,

popular press articles have noted that in a competitive job market, job seekers may need to take a creative approach to the job search to help themselves stand out from other candidates, but caution that this may also be a risky depending on the receptiveness of firms (Howington, 2018; Smith, 2013). As such, although creative job search self-efficacy may yield benefits through added exploration, there are possible risks that I explore in this investigation.

For individuals who experience enhanced networking self-efficacy, it is likely that they will engage in a focused job search effort, as their increased networking self-efficacy is likely to enhance their ease in approaching organizations they are interested in working for, or individuals in fields in which they may have contacts (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005). These job seekers are also likely to engage in exploratory job search effort, as networking self-efficacy should facilitate the active gathering of information from contacts that may open up employment opportunities that were previously unconsidered (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Gabriel et al., 2021). Finally, those individuals with enhanced networking self-efficacy may be less likely to engage in haphazard effort, as their use of their network requires a more strategic approach to job seeking given the necessity of communicating within one's network (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005).

Ultimately, I theorize that these different types of job search effort should facilitate job seekers' success. Here, I define success as obtaining not just interviews, but interviews that are of high quality (i.e., high person-organization fit; Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020). High quality interviews are those interviews in which applicants perceive themselves as being compatible with either the organization or the job itself (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Koen et al., 2010).

Individuals who perceive themselves as having a high level of fit with the job and/or organization they are interviewing with may be more motivated to pursue the employment relationship (e.g., Verquer et al., 2003; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Further, perceptions of fit

may also indicate to job seekers that their job search is going well, as they are finding positions and organizations that align with their values (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1994). Thus, by bringing the appraisal of fit into the conceptualization of interviews, I am able to establish whether different types of job search effort promote outcomes associated with self-enhancement (Bandura, 2001). Focused and exploratory job search effort in particular are likely to increase perceptions of fit, as job seekers who engage in these types of job search effort have greater clarity regarding where and why they are directing their job search effort (Gabriel et al., 2021). Conversely, the use of haphazard job search effort may inhibit perceptions of fit, as there is greater uncertainty regarding whether or not the applicant is qualified in terms of prior education and experience (Koen et al., 2010). Thus, by encouraging job seekers to shift their anxiety to excitement, I anticipate a beneficial impact on downstream post-interview perceived fit via enhanced creative and networking self-efficacy and different types of job search effort, with the exception of the potentially detrimental influence of creative self-efficacy via haphazard job search. In sum, drawing on research in social psychology (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Fredrickson, 2001) and the emotion regulation literature (e.g., Ford et al., 2019), I seek to bring greater nuance and clarity to the discussion surrounding positive and negative affect during the job search by looking at discrete emotions and challenging the general conception that negative and positive affective states are likely to yield similar benefits to job seekers (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020).

Importantly, while I propose that reappraising weekly states of anxiety to excitement is likely to positively impact same-week feelings of self-efficacy and job search outcomes, from a theoretical perspective the effectiveness of such an intervention is likely to be affected by the clarity of the goals held by the job seeker. One attribute that is likely to be salient in influencing intervention effectiveness is the extent to which job seekers possess *job search goal clarity*,

which refers to the extent to which job seekers understand their search objectives (Wanberg et al., 2002) and approach their search with purposefulness (van Hooft et al., 2013). Because the job search is a goal-directed behavior (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018), job seekers who possess higher job search goal clarity should feel an enhanced sense of excitement when they reappraise their anxiety, as they have a clearer understanding of the potential positive outcomes of their search as it relates to the achievement of their job search goals (Saks, 2005; Wanberg et al., 2002). Conversely, individuals who lack job search goal clarity are likely to be overwhelmed and may struggle with understanding how to direct their job search, diminishing the effectiveness of the intervention (Côté et al., 2006; Saks, 2005). As such, job search goal clarity—a between-person individual difference—should strengthen the positive relation between my intervention and downstream outcomes. My overall conceptual model is presented in Figure 1.

This study makes a number of contributions to the job search literature. First, I contribute to the study of affective experiences during the job search by addressing whether job search anxiety may be mitigated by reappraising the job search as promoting excitement, such that individuals experience job search excitement instead of anxiety and increase their creative and networking self-efficacy. Understanding changes in discrete emotions is important for increasing insight on the differing perspective of emotions put forth by affect-as-information theory (Carver & Scheier, 2012) and social cognitive theory of self-regulation (Bandura, 1991) that are often drawn on when discussing emotions during the job search (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2018, 2020; Wanberg et al., 1999). Indeed, this perspective critically expands on previous work that has looked at the effects of high arousal generalized positive and negative affect on effort (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020), but has not considered shifts from one emotion to another. In doing so, I also promote a novel within-person intervention design that, compared to prior interventions

related to affect during the job search (e.g., Brown et al., 2010), may be more effective in addressing the negative affective states of job seekers across weeks of job seeking. By emphasizing theoretical and empirical alignment with the unfolding nature of the job search emphasized in the literature (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; van Hooft et al., 2020) and prior research on affect during the job search (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; Gabriel et al., 2021), I also aim to increase the effectiveness of this intervention shifting job seekers from affective states of anxiety to states of excitement. Further, by conducting a weekly within-person affective intervention, I test whether shorter interventions over longer periods of time are as effective, or potentially more effective, than heretofore utilized time intensive interventions targeted at unemployed job seekers (e.g., Hulshof et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2002; Vinokur et al., 1995). Thus, this intervention has theoretical and practical implications for the current research on affect during the job search process.

Second, I expand on the research on self-efficacy during the job search in by introducing the concept of creative job search self-efficacy, and by exploring previously unaddressed relationships between emotions, networking self-efficacy, and subsequent job search effort. While research in the job search literature has discussed several different forms of self-efficacy, including generalized job search self-efficacy (e.g., Moynihan et al., 2003), job search behavior and job search outcomes (e.g., Saks et al. 2015), re-employment self-efficacy (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2014), and—most recently—networking self-efficacy (e.g., Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020), scholars have not considered the possible role of creative self-efficacy in the job search process. Considering that the job search is a dynamic process, and the ability to be creative facilitates success in dynamic environments (Baer & Oldham, 2006), creative job search self-efficacy may help support job seeker success by facilitating exploratory job search behaviors

that may result in an increase in high quality interviews (Koen et al., 2010). The addition of creative job search self-efficacy also expands our understanding of self-efficacy as it pertains to social cognitive theory, as Bandura (2001) suggests that self-efficacy more generally (and creative job search self-efficacy specifically) affects adaptation and the types of activities and environments (e.g., types of job search effort) individuals pursue. As a critical caveat, creative self-efficacy may promote job search efforts by enhancing individual's propensity to engage in exploratory effort, but it also may inhibit efforts by reducing engagement in focused job search effort and increasing haphazard job search effort. Thus, I challenge the conception put forth in social cognitive theory that self-efficacy will be unilaterally beneficial for self-regulatory behaviors.

Similarly, although networking self-efficacy is also found to influence the activities of job seekers (e.g., Van Hove et al., 2019; Wanberg, van Hooft et al., 2020), the study of networking self-efficacy in the job search literature remains nascent. Indeed, the understanding of the relationship between affect and networking self-efficacy, and the causal mechanisms linking networking self-efficacy and job search outcomes, deserves further exploration given the importance of networking for job seekers (e.g., Van Hove et al., 2009). Further, social cognitive theory suggests that self-efficacy impacts the quality of the job search, yet the direct effect of networking self-efficacy on job seeker's types of job search effort and interview quality (i.e., post-interview perceived fit) remains unknown. Importantly, prior research has positioned networking self-efficacy as a between person variable (e.g., Van Hove et al., 2019), neglecting the possibility that networking self-efficacy may fluctuate within individuals impacting job search quality week-to-week (Liu, Wang, et al., 2014). As such, it is beneficial to expand the current nomological network of networking self-efficacy by exploring how it is predicted by

affect and influences subsequent job search effort and downstream interview fit perceptions.

Third, I contribute to the understanding of different types of job search effort by integrating them into the social cognitive theory perspective on job search (Bandura, 1991; Bandura, 2001) as indicators of adaptation during the job search. Bandura (2001) notes that the types of activities (e.g., types of job search effort) individuals engage in may impact the direction of personal (and in the case of job seeking, professional) development. Given the importance of job search effort to job search success (da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016; Gabriel et al., 2021; Kanfer et al., 2001), understanding the *types* of job search effort is important for furthering our understanding of social cognitive theory as it applies to the job search, as it helps to elucidate how different forms of effort may function as an adaptive mechanism between efficacy types and self-enhancing or self-hindering outcomes (e.g., high quality interviews).

Fourth, I contribute both theoretically and practically to the job search literature by investigating the *quality* of job search outcomes, specifically post-interview perceived fit (i.e., fit with interviewing organizations; e.g., van Hooft et al., 2013; 2020). Job search scholarship has predominantly drawn on generalized measures, such as the number of interviews or number of offers, to establish that a job search is successful (Kanfer et al., 2001). However, such measures conceal the quality of individual job search efforts, wherein a good quality job search is likely to result in interviews with organizations, and for jobs, that one is highly compatible with. Per social cognitive theory, this is important for facilitating self-enhancement (Bandura, 2001), as personal and professional development are more likely to result from placement in a high-quality position given the benefits of being employed at an organization, and in a job, wherein one has a high level of fit (e.g., Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Resick et al., 2007; Verquer et al., 2003). Therefore, this dissertation addresses the calls to investigate indicators of job search quality (van

Hooft et al., 2013) and expands on the current conceptualization of interviews in the job search literature (e.g., number of interviews; Kanfer et al., 2001; van Hooft et al., 2020).

Finally, I seek to improve scholarly understanding regarding what stable individual differences between job seekers influence the effectiveness of my intervention by exploring the role of job search goal clarity in facilitating enhanced excitement and diminished anxiety during the job search. While I emphasize the importance of excitement as a predictor of self-efficacy and subsequent job search quality, whether or not individuals are able to effectively harness their positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), or if they are likely to remain mired in job search anxiety week-to-week, is likely influenced by person-level factors. Thus, I contribute to a holistic understanding of how within-person processes and between-person characteristics interact in predicting the effectiveness of reappraising one's anxiety as excitement.

Theory and Hypotheses

Theoretical Background

As noted above, the self-regulatory perspective is dominant in the job search literature (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018). The pursuit of new employment is predicated on the idea that job seeking requires goal-directed cognitions and behaviors that focus on preparing for the job search (e.g., developing résumés), identifying job opportunities (e.g., by searching for open positions or networking), and pursuing identified opportunities (e.g., applying for jobs, going on interviews) on a week-to-week basis (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; Kanfer et al., 2001; van Hooft et al., 2020)¹. As the job search unfolds over time, the uncertainty of the process and high probability of setbacks creates a need to continuously self-manage one's thoughts and behaviors (e.g., Song et al., 2009; Wanberg et al., 2010). Therefore, self-regulation is critical for managing

¹ Although there are multiple timeframes that can be used for studying job search, the weekly timeframe is most common for new labor market entrants given that they often have competing demands due to school and part-time employment that preclude a full-time (i.e., daily) job search experience (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016).

volition and action to facilitate a successful job search (van Hooft et al., 2020).

Importantly, past scholarship suggests that job seekers who engage in high levels of self-regulation during the job search are likely to experience greater job search process quality, wherein individuals who exhibit heightened self-control of their thoughts, emotions, and behavior over time and across changing circumstances are able to adapt and achieve their desired goals (Karoly, 1993; van Hooft et al., 2013). Self-regulatory acts consist of techniques that job seekers utilize to facilitate goal achievement, including the development of clear employment goals (van Hooft et al., 2005), engagement in job search effort (Gabriel et al., 2021), monitoring progress and adapting to feedback (Chawla et al., 2019), learning during the job search (Turban et al., 2009), and—pertinent to the current investigation—reappraisal of moods and emotions during the job search (Wanberg et al., 1999). Indeed, job search scholars have noted that job seekers' moods and emotions are likely to play a highly salient role in shaping the cognitions job seekers have, and the behaviors they ultimately engage in (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2014; da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; Gabriel et al., 2021). In many ways, job seekers' weekly emotions have the potential to color the actions they take later in the same job seeking episode (i.e., one week of job seeking; for similar theorizing pertaining to the effects of mood coloring cognitions and behaviors, see: Hill et al., 2021; Rothbard & Wilk, 2011).

When it comes to arguing for the importance of emotions during job search, scholars who are studying job seeking often turn to one of two self-regulation theories—control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998; 2012) and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991; 2001)—which tend to offer somewhat conflicting perspective on what the role of emotions are in the self-regulatory process. The early iterations of control theory present it as a framework for understanding self-regulatory intra-individual processes (Carver & Scheier, 1982), wherein individuals experience negative

feedback loops that signal a discrepancy between one's current state and their ideal state. Such discrepancy detections should ultimately trigger behavior focused on minimizing the discrepancy in order to achieve (or return to) one's ideal state (Campion & Lord, 1982; Klein, 1989).

Accordingly, negative affect is the intrapersonal signal that highlights to individuals that there is a discrepancy that needs to be resolved (Carver & Scheier, 1982; Lord et al., 2010). As such, negative affect should be adaptive for individuals when it comes to mobilizing the levels of energetic resources that are needed to achieve goals (in the current study, obtain a job).

Subsequent iterations of control theory integrated positive affective states (Carver & Scheier, 1990), suggesting that positive emotions signal that a *positive* discrepancy is occurring, meaning that more effort is being exerted than necessary. This prompts either a reduction in self-regulatory behavior or coasting (i.e., maintaining one's current level of effort with no additional exertion; Carver, 2003; 2004; Carver & Scheier, 1998). Presently, control theory maintains these two perspectives, such that positive emotions signal to an individual that they are doing better at something than is necessary, and negative emotions indicate that they are doing worse than they need to (Carver, 2003; Carver & Scheier, 1998; for an empirical demonstration, see: Gabriel & Diefendorff, 2015). Thus, individuals who are experiencing a negative affective state will exert more effort in order to diminish the discrepancy and rid themselves of their negative affect and related goal discrepancy (Carver, 2003; 2004). Conversely, individuals experiencing positive affect will either reduce effort and slow down performance, or choose to "coast" as they perceive themselves as being ahead of a desired goal, allowing them to allocate resources towards other goals that may be competing for their attention (Carver, 2003; 2004; Diel et al., 2021).

As job seeking involves job seekers actively monitoring their environments for cues that help them determine whether they are closer to their ideal state (e.g., Chawla et al., 2019), it is

perhaps not surprising that job search scholars have turned to control theory as one plausible theoretical explanation for how job seekers monitor and maintain progress towards finding a job. Indeed, job search scholars drawing from control theory suggest that negative affective states during the job search signal a discrepancy between one's desired state of employment and one's current state of (un)employment, with negative affect triggering self-regulatory job search processes (e.g., increased job search effort; da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2014; Gabriel et al., 2021; Wanberg et al., 2010). In support of the control theory perspective outlined above, da Motta Veiga and Turban (2014) surveyed 101 new labor market entrants and found that positive affect (at t) was *negatively* related to job search intensity (at t and $t + 1$), while negative affect (at $t - 1$) was positively related to job search intensity (at $t + 1$). More recently, Gabriel et al. (2021) found that anxiety stemming from job seeking during the COVID-19 pandemic at t indirectly benefited various forms of subsequent job search effort at $t + 1$ (i.e., dream job search effort, focused job search effort, and exploratory job search effort) dependent upon the pathway that was activated for job seekers. Specifically, when job seekers thought proactively about problems related to their search (i.e., problem-solving pondering; Querstret & Cropley, 2012) in response to feeling anxious, beneficial outcomes ensued. However, highlighting the downside of anxiety—a point that will become central to my theorizing below—when job seekers responded to anxiety with affect-focused rumination (i.e., ruminative cognitions that focus on the worry and/or tension a person feels during job search; Chawla et al., 2019), this detracted from their job seeking efforts.

Critically, besides these aforementioned effects, the remaining tests of control theory in the job search literature are mixed. For instance, Wanberg and colleagues (2010) did not find a relationship between negative or positive affect and job search effort. However, they did find that increased perceptions of job search progress were negatively related to subsequent effort, lending

some support for the idea that job seekers may decelerate or coast in their efforts. da Motta Veiga and colleagues (2020) also found mixed support for control theory, such that activated negative *and* positive affect both promoted subsequent job search effort, while deactivated positive and negative affect did not. In addition, at the between-person level of analysis, Crossley and Stanton (2005) found a negative indirect effect of negative affect on interview and job search success via job search self-efficacy and job search intensity. Interestingly, Crossley and Stanton (2005) also found a *positive* direct relationship between negative affect and job search success and a non-significant direct effect of negative affect on interview success. Thus, conclusions surrounding the relationship between negative affect and job search success remain uncertain.

In addition to the control theory perspective, job search scholars have also drawn on tenets situated within social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991; 2001). Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986; 1991; 2001) has a similar thesis to control theory (Carver, 2003) in regard to the idea that self-regulation is an intra-individual process, with affective states playing a critical role in influencing self-regulatory behaviors (Bandura, 1989; 2001). Yet, rather than touting the benefits of negative affect, social cognitive theory emphasizes the self-regulatory drive of positive affect instead (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018, 2020). More specifically, Bandura (1986; 1989; 1999; 2001) emphasized in the development of social cognitive theory that human functioning occurs as a result of bi-directional reciprocal relationships of internal personal factors, including affect. Importantly, social cognitive theory argues that affective experiences will help shape individual's self-efficacy beliefs, with these beliefs being critical in affecting adaptation and change in an individual's behavior. By definition, self-efficacy represents an individual's belief that they may exert control over their own behavior (e.g., engage in self-regulatory acts) and manage (at least to some extent) their environment (Bandura, 1997; 2001).

Therefore, social cognitive theory considers self-efficacy to be critical to the stimulation of self-regulatory behavior because it encourages engagement (versus passiveness), and may ultimately influence the activities that individuals pursue, which in turn affect personal development by promoting certain competencies, values, and interests (Bandura, 2001; Holden, 1991).

In positioning self-efficacy as a key determinate of self-regulatory behavior, Bandura (1999) addressed different sources of self-efficacy, and argued that affective cues serve as key drivers of how efficacious a person feels (e.g., Tillema et al., 2001). Within this theoretical lens, the reduction of negative affective experiences (such as anxiety) and the stimulation of positive affective experiences (such as excitement) are important for promoting self-efficacy beliefs that spur self-regulatory behaviors (Cervone et al., 1994). Arguing this point directly, Bandura (1999) highlights that it is beneficial for individuals to manage their negative affective states in order to avoid experiences of low self-efficacy that may contribute to individuals avoiding difficult tasks (e.g., engaging with their job search) and maintaining low aspirations (e.g., looking for any form of employment haphazardly versus looking for positions that are a good fit).

Thus, while control theory positions negative affect as motivational in encouraging individuals to reduce discrepancies between their current state and a desired goal state, and positive affect as reducing effort and encouraging coasting, social cognitive theory suggests the opposite—negative affect should hinder feeling efficacious, with positive affective experiences promoting various forms of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989; 2001). Yet, the applications of social cognitive theory in the job search literature have not always fully considered the causal chain evoked by the theory. For example, Chawla et al. (2019) found that weekly feedback quality positively related to positive affect, which in turn promoted metacognitive strategies and hours spent job seeking in the next week. Importantly, the weekly effects of self-efficacy were not

considered, though Chawla et al. (2019) did consider feedback self-efficacy as a stable, cross-level moderator. da Motta Veiga et al. (2020) also identified the benefits of activated positive affect for job seekers, though there was no consideration of self-efficacy. Others, such as Sun et al. (2013), have focused purely on within-person effects of self-efficacy, finding that monthly job search self-efficacy interacted with prevention focus at the between-person level to predict job seeker's effort month-to-month. Yet, neither Sun et al. (2013), nor Wanberg et al. (2010), found a direct effect of within-person job search self-efficacy or reemployment self-efficacy on job search effort (i.e., the effect by Sun et al. [2013] was qualified by the interaction mentioned previously). Thus, similar to studies applying control theory, the within-person relation between positive affect, self-efficacy, and job search behavior remains inconclusive to date.

Taken together, the results (or lack thereof) at the within-person level of analysis are surprising considering the importance of affective states for self-regulation broadly, and during the job search specifically (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020). Such findings also stand in somewhat stark contrast to between-person investigations in the job search literature, as research has linked cognitive reappraisal strategies (Wang & Yan, 2018) and emotion control (Wanberg et al. 1999) with increased self-efficacy, as well as negative affect with reduced self-efficacy (Crossley & Stanton, 2005). Further, trait positive affect has been shown to predict increased motivation control that promotes job search intensity (Turban et al., 2013), as well as predicting job search clarity and subsequent job search intensity (Côté et al., 2006), and the use of multiple types of job search strategies (e.g., social and non-social strategies; Burger & Caldwell, 2000).

Given the research outlined above, there are two areas that within-person job search scholarship can improve, which would help address ideas espoused by control theory and social cognitive theory. First, aligning with da Motta Veiga et al. (2020) and within-person research on

anxiety during job seeking (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021), I argue that added clarity can be gained by focusing on how job seekers can harness a specific type of negative affect—*anxiety*—by shifting their activated affect into feelings of excitement. In so doing, I take aspects of control theory and social cognitive theory, and integrate these with the broaden-and-build perspective of positive emotions put forth by Fredrickson (2001), in order to argue that the drive associated with the *activation* of affect is what drives self-regulation (e.g., Brooks, 2014; Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Second, given the mixed findings of affect to various indicators of self-efficacy and job search effort, I consider how two distinct forms of self-efficacy sparked by affect—creative self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy—help explain when and why affect is beneficial. In so doing, I develop a within-person intervention to clarify the extent to which negative versus positive affect helps or hinders job seeker self-regulation. Below, I first review the theory behind my planned intervention, followed by the downstream consequences associated with the benefits of the intervention itself.

An Intervention Transforming Anxiety to Excitement in Job Search

Anxiety is an affective state that is generally considered to be detrimental, with past research labeling anxiety as an unpleasant emotional experience negatively related to cognitive performance (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992; Eysenck et al., 2007). Feelings of anxiety are often a response to uncertainty surrounding the future (Lazarus, 1991), and/or an individual's fear of not being able to achieve an important goal (e.g., finding employment; Diestel & Schmidt, 2012; Rodell & Judge, 2009). Theorizing on anxiety in the management literature specifically suggests that high levels of anxiety can create extreme experiences of arousal that interfere with self-regulation (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018), such that for individuals experiencing anxiety, self-regulation is directed at managing the experience of anxiety versus managing one's goal-directed

efforts (Kanfer et al., 1996). States of anxiety may also contribute to experiences of depletion, as coping with anxiety (and the causes of anxiety states) requires individuals to exercise volitional self-control (Eysenck et al., 2007; Prem et al., 2016). As such, state anxiety has the potential to impair attentional control by turning attention to the potential threat (e.g., unemployment) and away from goal directed attention that is important for task performance (e.g., job seeking; Eysenck et al., 2007). Thus, while arousal associated with anxiety may be motivate job seeker's efforts (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021), it also has the possibility to be a source of interference.

Other lines of research outside of job search scholarship suggest that for individuals experiencing anxiety, the behavioral tendency is to engage in avoidance or escape (Brodish & Devine, 2009; Humphreys & Revelle, 1984; Lazarus, 1991; Mackey & Perrewé, 2014). For new labor market entrants who are job seeking for the first time (the sample investigated in this dissertation), this withdrawal behavior may be quite prominent, as they have multiple obligations (e.g., school, part-time work) that they may prioritize in order to avoid the distress of job seeking and manage their job search anxiety. Therefore, it is important to understand how the arousal associated with anxiety that scholars have cited as promoting self-regulatory behavior (e.g., Cheng & McCarthy, 2018; Gabriel et al., 2021) may be harnessed adaptively, and decoupled from the negative affective experience that may trigger avoidance and withdrawal tendencies.

Research by Brooks (2014) suggests a promising avenue for harnessing the arousal of anxiety while decoupling it from the downsides associated with states of anxiety. Namely, the similarly high arousal, but positively valenced, state of excitement in many ways represents the counterpart to anxiety. Excitement parallels the anticipatory nature of anxiety by being an emotional response to an appraisal of the future. However, it differs from anxiety in that the future is not perceived as a threat, but rather as an opportunity that offers the potential for

positive outcomes (Ashby et al., 1999; Brown & Curhan, 2013; Lerner & Keltner, 2001). For new labor market entrants, this means that instead of being anxious about the possibility of being unemployed (a threat), job seekers who feel excited may instead focus on the potential to start a new job post-graduation (an opportunity). Thus, when individuals are excited versus anxious about their job search, they may be more likely to engage in job search behaviors that are adaptive and preserve their well-being, and less likely to reduce effort or avoid job seeking. This perspective aligns with broaden-and-build theory (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001), which posits that positive affective states (such as excitement) encourage approach-oriented behaviors, and the proposition of social cognitive theory, which argues that positive affective states serve as a signal that individuals are capable of engaging in the job search (i.e., increased self-efficacy).

Past research outside of the job seeking context generally supports this “flip” from anxiety to excitement. For instance, research on negotiations by Brown and Curhan (2013) highlighted that arousal, defined as the activation of the autonomic nervous system, has a polarization effect depending on if that arousal has a positive or negative construal. In a series of experiments, they found that participants who had a negative attitude towards negotiation exhibited reduced negotiation performance when they were in a high arousal state. Conversely, individuals looking forward to negotiating exhibited increased performance when in a state of arousal during the negotiation. Further supporting the potentially beneficial performance effects of a high arousal positive affective state, Brooks (2014) conducted a series of experiments that induced anxiety, and then utilized an intervention to encourage participants to reappraise their anxiety as excitement. Across three different types of performance activities (i.e., singing, public speaking, math performance under time pressure), reappraising anxiety as excitement using simple self-statements (e.g., “I am excited”) generated increased performance relative to

individuals who tried to reappraise their anxiety as calmness, or individuals who did not try to reappraise their anxiety at all. Importantly, Brooks (2014) focused on discrete performance episodes, but also utilized relatively simple reappraisal instructions, such as telling participants simply to “get excited” prior to participant’s engaging in the experimental task.

For my dissertation, individuals reappraised their job search anxiety to excitement by journaling about why they are excited for their job search at the start of each week. My approach to affective reappraisal parallels techniques used in cognitive behavioral therapy for populations with clinical social anxiety, as Goldin et al. (2014) found that once weekly reappraisal sessions can effectively reduce social anxiety through increased reappraisal self-efficacy. Interestingly, despite the prevalence of job search scholars referencing experiences of anxiety occurring during the job search (e.g., Crossley & Stanton, 2005; Gabriel et al., 2021; Kanfer et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2016; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009; Saks, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 2000; Wanberg et al., 2005; van Hooft et al., 2020) and the focus of job search scholars on interventions to improve job seeker outcomes (for a review, see: Liu, Huang, et al., 2014), to date, there has been limited work on whether or not interventions are effective in helping job seekers manage their job search anxiety in such a way that it positively impacts their job search behavior and subsequent outcomes week-to-week.

In support of the efficacy of job search interventions, job search scholars have conducted a number of experimental and quasi-experimental studies investigating the effects of different interventions on job seekers (Liu, Huang, et al., 2014; Wanberg, Ali, et al., 2020). The most popular job search intervention that is tested in the job search literature is the JOBS intervention developed for unemployed job seekers by the University of Michigan that has been shown to improve job seeker outcomes, such as re-employment quality, in samples from the United States,

Europe, and China (e.g., Caplan et al., 1989; Barry et al., 2006; Brenninkmeijer & Blonk, 2011; Price & Vinokur, 2018; Vinokur et al., 2000; Vuori et al., 2002). The JOBS intervention was developed to be administered to groups of eight to twenty job seekers and consists of a team of two trainers focused on educating participants on how to conduct an effective job search (e.g., identifying marketable skills, learning how to present oneself in an interview), as well as building social (e.g., networking) and emotional (e.g., confidence) resources (Price & Vinokur, 2018). The program was designed to be administered by specially trained facilitators and take place over five 4-hour sessions during one week (Curran et al., 1999; Price & Vinokur, 2018).

While JOBS is likely the most comprehensive and well-tested intervention in the literature, it has several limitations. The JOBS intervention was designed with the needs of unemployed individuals in mind, and research utilizing the JOBS intervention has highlighted that it reduces depression and distress in those individuals who have experienced job loss (Vinokur et al., 1995; Vuori et al., 2005). However, the reduction of distress is not addressed *directly* in the JOBS intervention, making it unclear how the intervention is benefitting this aspect of job seeking for job seekers. Rather, the main issues addressed by the JOBS intervention are helping job seekers' develop job searching skills and prepare for setbacks. Interestingly, despite not directly addressing affect, Price and Vinokur (2014) noted that the JOBS intervention considers the emotional well-being of individuals important for an effective job search as it prevents the deterioration in mental health that may be detrimental to job search efforts. Thus, while not directly addressing participants' emotional needs, the JOBS intervention highlights the importance of managing affective states for an effective job search.

For new labor market entrants who have competing demands, the JOBS intervention may be too time consuming to be practically meaningful. In order to do a job search intervention of

the level of involvement that JOBS requires (i.e., 20 hours over one week), career centers and students would have to administer/attend the intervention during a week in between semesters, something that may not be feasible for students who hold multiple roles. Thus, my study addresses this issue practically by designing a within-person intervention that lasts multiple weeks (rather than one week), but is self-guided by the individual, utilizing a technique that is common in the emotion regulation and cognitive behavioral therapy literatures. As such, for new labor market entrants, and job seekers more generally, my intervention is likely to be more accessible. I also directly address in my intervention job seekers' potential state anxiety, a prevalent emotion given the uncertainty surrounding future employment that has been shown to inhibit job seeker performance (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004).

Importantly, and as evidenced by the JOBS intervention, most job search interventions are one-time training sessions that focus on improving job search skills, job search self-efficacy, and/or job search motivation (e.g., stress management or goal setting; Audhoe et al., 2010; Lui, Huang, et al., 2014; Saks, 2005). These interventions do not address individual's affective states when job seeking, but use measures of well-being (e.g., depression) to elucidate that their interventions help job seekers' emotional well-being. One exception is an intervention by Brown et al. (2010). In this intervention, Brown et al. (2010) trained individuals on job skills, as well as verbal self-guidance, or converting negative self-statements into positive ones. This intervention is unique for several reasons, one being that it focuses on students, as most job search interventions focus on unemployed individuals given the economic impact of unemployment versus new labor market entrants (e.g., Vinokur et al., 2005). However, similar to what is being seen with the impact of the COVID-19 job market (Gabriel et al., 2021), this study highlighted the global financial recession of 2008 as having substantial economic impact on new labor

market entrants, increasing youth unemployment rates and noting that new labor market entrants may have longer job searches (Brown et al., 2010; see also: Beaudry et al., 2002; Coy, 2009).

Another unique feature of the Brown et al. (2010) intervention is that it measured job search anxiety, looking specifically at the influence of the intervention on anxiety and the effect of this discrete emotion on interview performance. In their theorizing, they draw from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), noting that individuals who experience high anxiety during the job search may convince themselves that they will not conduct a successful job search. Thus, in addition to teaching self-management (e.g., goal setting), the intervention also had individuals list out areas they were insecure about regarding their job search and convert these negative self-statements to positive self-statements (e.g., “I will do poorly in the interview” to “I can prepare to do well in the interview”). Combined with the self-management training, the verbal self-guidance contributed to an increase in self-efficacy and a decrease in anxiety compared to pre-intervention levels that contributed in part to improved interview performance and increased job searching behaviors (e.g., time spent looking for a job) (Brown et al., 2010). Thus, the Brown et al. (2010) intervention represents a promising initial study regarding the benefits of reducing anxiety. However, this study is limited in that, similar to other interventions, it consisted of only a one-time training session, and did not thoroughly track job seekers on a weekly basis. Additionally, the study focused on *reducing* anxiety, versus *promoting* positive emotions (i.e., excitement), a factor that may have contributed to the limited effect of verbal self-guidance on self-efficacy compared to when it was paired with the self-management training.

In considering what elements contribute to an effective job search intervention, Liu, Huang, et al. (2014) noted that interventions that improve job seeker’s self-efficacy ($OR = 3.25$) were more effective in assisting individuals in obtaining employment compared to interventions

that did not influence self-efficacy ($OR = 1.73$), suggesting that self-efficacy is a critical mediator linking job search interventions with employment outcomes. Drawing from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997; 2001), I suggest that reappraising anxiety to excitement on a weekly basis should enhance two specific forms of self-efficacy that are pertinent to current labor markets that new labor market entrants are having to adapt to (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021). In particular, shifting from negative to positive states of affective arousal broadens cognitions that enhance the propensity to be creative (Fredrickson, 2001), likely through an increased belief in one's ability to use creative problem-solving in the job search, or *creative job search self-efficacy*. Further, given that positive emotions increase sociability (Fredrickson, 2001), shifting from being anxious to excited should increase *networking self-efficacy*. In turn, these enhanced experiences of self-efficacy should contribute to the broader use of different types of job search effort (i.e., *focused*, *exploratory*, and *haphazard job search effort*) that may impact the fit with employers who job seekers ultimately interview with (i.e., *post-interview perceived fit*). I outline the theoretical arguments from broaden-and-build theory and social cognitive theory for these relationships, in addition to outlining how stable features of one's search—job search goal clarity—may affect my intervention.²

Effects on Networking and Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy

The unstructured nature of the job search requires individuals to draw on personal resources, and one particularly valuable personal resource is job seeker's job search self-efficacy (Hobfoll, 2002; Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1992; Laguna et al., 2017). Per social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991; 2001) and extant job search scholarship (e.g., Kanfer et al., 2001; Kim et al., 2019; Zikic & Saks, 2009), self-efficacy is an important component of the self-regulation of

² Because I focus on the benefits of excitement—a high arousal positive emotion (Brooks, 2014)—I do not draw on control theory in making my main hypotheses for this study, as control theory suggests that this positive affective state would be detrimental, rather than beneficial, for promoting job seeker self-regulatory behavior.

behavior, as the belief in one's capability to engage in a particular task facilitates subsequent self-regulatory behaviors. Aligning with social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991), and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), I position the shift in anxiety to excitement through my intervention as a proximal predictor of self-efficacy week-to-week. Indeed, feelings of excitement are likely to increase within-person self-efficacy, as an aroused positive affective state associated with optimistic thoughts of one's future is likely to promote experiences of self-efficacy necessary to strive for one's desired state (Guan et al., 2014).

Currently, job search scholarship predominantly concentrates on two types of self-efficacy: (1) job search behavior self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to conduct different job search behaviors; and (2) job search outcome (or employment) self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to achieve their desired job search outcomes (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2018; Guan et al., 2014; Pajic et al., 2018; Saks & Ashforth, 1999; Saks et al., 2015; Trougakos et al., 2007; Wanberg et al., 2010; Zikic & Saks, 2009). Within person research on these two types of self-efficacy shows that job search behavior self-efficacy positively predicts job search behavior, while job search outcomes self-efficacy negatively predicts job search behavior and job search intensity (da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2018; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014). However, one limitation of the measurements of job search behavior self-efficacy is that it includes items pertaining to a number of different areas, some of which may be distinct and deserving of their own separate self-efficacy measure in order to clarify past research that has found somewhat mixed findings (e.g., Sun et al. 2013; Wanberg et al., 2010). For example, job search behavior self-efficacy measures include a number of items pertaining to networking behavior, including making cold calls and using social networks (e.g., Saks et al., 2015). Given that research has recently begun to address networking self-efficacy as its own form of task-specific self-efficacy in the job search

(e.g., Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020; Van Hooft et al., 2009), the continued elucidation of more specific types of job search self-efficacy, such as creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy, and their impact on job seekers' behavior, could add needed clarity.

Specifically, my intervention should increase individual's experiences of creative job search self-efficacy. While not currently addressed in the job search literature, research on the concept of creative self-efficacy is burgeoning in management scholarship (Farmer & Tierney, 2017; Tierney & Farmer, 2002; 2011). Per Tierney and Farmer (2002), creative self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs in their ability to be creative (Grosser et al., 2016; Malik et al., 2019; Tierney & Farmer, 2011). In the organizational context, this belief is associated with increased creative performance (Gong et al., 2009; Tierney & Farmer, 2002; 2004; Wang et al., 2014), divergent thinking (Mathison & Bronnick, 2009), and monetary bonuses (Liao et al., 2010), as well as the perceived viability of business ideas (Heinone et al., 2011; for a review, see: Puente-Díaz, 2016). By promoting creativity and "outside of the box" thinking, creative job search self-efficacy may facilitate individual resilience during uncertain endeavors (e.g., the job search; Bandura & Locke, 2003; Tierney & Farmer, 2011), as the generation of novel and useful ideas and their subsequent implementation can aid the successful navigation of dynamic, changing environments (Amabile et al., 1996) and ambiguous roles (Wang et al., 2011)—both of which are key characteristics of the job search (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; Kanfer et al., 2001).

Indeed, creative job search self-efficacy is likely to be beneficial for job seekers, especially in highly competitive job markets, as belief in one's ability to approach the job search creatively may encourage individuals to engage in the job search in a novel way that allows them to differentiate themselves or find opportunities they may have otherwise overlooked (Li et al., 2020; Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). By believing in their ability to take a creative approach to the job

search, job seekers are likely to be more persistent and resilient to setbacks because they are less likely to perceive themselves as exhausting all of their potential employment options during their search (Liao et al., 2010; Gong et al., 2009). In support of this theorizing, within-person research by Ng and Lucianetti (2016) found that creative self-efficacy positively predicted within-individual increases in idea generation—the extent to which individuals generated ideas for improvement in the workplace and sought out new working methods, techniques, or instruments.

The potential usefulness of creative self-efficacy in the job search is also reflected in the stream of research regarding impression management during the job search (e.g., Bourdage et al., 2018; Powell et al., 2020; van Iddekinge et al., 2007; Waung et al., 2017). Considering that individuals may need to present themselves differently to each potential employer in order to be considered a viable candidate, the belief in their ability to generate novel ideas regarding the pursuit and execution of job search behaviors may be strategically beneficial. More specifically, individuals who adjust their presentation of their previous employment and/or educational background in order to align with specific employment positions have been found to receive higher ratings on interview evaluations (Bourdage et al., 2018). Similarly, individuals who incorporated impression management tactics into résumés and cover letters also received more favorable evaluations (Waung et al., 2017). Thus, the perceived confidence to approach one's job search creatively could result in individuals directing job search effort towards employment opportunities they may otherwise not have considered by encouraging creative thinking about how their previous experiences and education could fit with a potential employer.

Importantly, my intervention for reappraising anxiety to excitement represents a promising approach for promoting job seekers' experiences of creative job search self-efficacy. In alignment with social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), positive affective states are likely to

drive individual's experiences of creative self-efficacy, as these states promote a focus on potential future success versus failure, facilitating individual pursuit of yet unrealized rewards (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). Further, based on broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), positive emotional states like excitement promote broadened cognition, stimulating job seekers' openness to a larger variety of behavioral options, compared to negative affective states, such as anxiety, that narrow goal-directed focus. Indeed, a positive affective state of excitement is more likely to stimulate spontaneous ideas that facilitate connecting previously disparate notions, thus encouraging creativity (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). As positive affect promotes job seeker's broadening of the amount of information they take in, these individuals likely conceive and believe in their ability to utilize flexible thinking and creativity in the job search process (Fredrickson, 2001). Thus, reappraising anxiety to excitement is likely to stimulate the confidence and cognitions necessary to feel creatively efficacious about one's job search.

Supporting these tenets of broad-and-build theory and social cognitive theory, a number of studies have looked at the relationship between positive affect and creative self-efficacy specifically, as well as creativity more broadly (Anderson, et al., 2014; Bledow et al., 2013; George & Zhou, 2007; Li & Wu, 2011; Lin & Chang, 2020; Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). In their cross-sectional study, Li and Wu surveyed 970 participants and found that individual self-reported emotion regulation via cognitive reappraisal positively related to optimism, which in turn was associated with increased creative self-efficacy and subsequent innovative behaviors. At the within-person level, Ng and Lucianetti (2016) found that individuals who experienced psychologically safe organizational environments that reduced anxiety and fear at work displayed increased creative self-efficacy. Further supporting the potential benefits of a within-person cognitive reappraisal intervention focused on shifting anxiety to excitement, Bledow et al.

(2013) surveyed 116 individuals, working professional jobs that included a creative component, in the morning and after work over five days and found that negative affect in the morning moderated the positive relationship between positive affect and creativity in the afternoon, such that this relationship was stronger for individuals who experienced higher levels of negative affect in the morning. Thus, theory and research support the purported benefit of an anxiety to excitement intervention on creative job search self-efficacy. I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) and creative job search self-efficacy.

I also consider how my intervention affects networking self-efficacy, defined as job seeker's confidence in their ability to engage in networking (e.g., approaching, friends, family, and acquaintances about their job search, attending career fairs; Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020). Research suggests that networking is important for job seekers, as previous work has found that 44% of U.S. survey respondents indicated that their job placements were in part attributable to personal contacts (Franzen & Haangertner, 2006; see also: Barbulescu, 2015; Garg & Telang, 2018). Thus, considering the importance of self-efficacy to job search behaviors, and the relevance of networking to important job search outcomes, further exploration of networking self-efficacy in the literature is needed. To date, only a handful of studies have looked at networking self-efficacy (Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020; Wright, 2017; Van Hoyer et al., 2009) despite research alluding to the importance of individual confidence in their ability to network in facilitating job search success (e.g., Wanberg et al., 2000; 2012).

In regards to predictors of networking self-efficacy, Wright (2017) found that individuals who report an avoidance attachment style (i.e., those uncomfortable with interpersonal closeness) display lower networking self-efficacy. In addition, Wanberg, van Hooft, et al. (2020) developed a networking intervention called "Building Relationships and Improving Opportunities (BRIO)"

(p.560). Drawing from social cognitive theory, Wanberg, van Hooft, et al. (2020) note in their intervention that self-efficacy may be increased via either mastery experiences (e.g., practice), social modeling (e.g., watching someone else engage in the target behavior), or by persuading individuals to believe in themselves (Bandura, 1982; 2012). For their intervention, Wanberg, van Hooft, and colleagues (2020) developed videos that showed individuals interacting in networking scenarios (social modeling) and who become progressively better at networking across a series of videos (vicarious mastery modeling). There was also a career coach in the video who encouraged participants to be themselves and assured participants of their ability to engage in networking (persuasion to believe in oneself; Wanberg, van Hooft et al., 2020). This intervention (versus the control group) successfully promoted higher networking self-efficacy, which helped individuals become re-employed in jobs that they perceived as being an improvement over their previous employment, as well as being positively related to income, a job search outcome which is sometimes considered a proxy of job quality (Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020).

While the work of Wanberg, van Hooft, and colleagues (2020) represents a successful intervention and promising test of the benefits of networking self-efficacy, their theorizing omits another potential source of networking self-efficacy highlighted by social cognitive theory: the partial reliance on emotional states to assess one's self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012). Bandura (2012) states specifically that "efficacy beliefs are strengthened by reducing anxiety" (p. 13). Thus, my intervention focused on reappraising anxiety as excitement should benefit individual appraisals of their self-efficacy. Combining social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999; 2001; 2012) with the broaden-and-build theory of emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), reappraising anxiety to excitement is likely to improve individuals state (i.e., weekly) appraisals of their networking self-efficacy.

The broaden-and-build perspective suggests that individuals who are experiencing

positive emotional states (e.g., excitement) “widen the array of thoughts, action urges, and percepts” (p. 8), including the extent to which individuals may perceive their social circles as expansive and inclusive (Dovidio, et al., 1995; 1998; Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). Thus, per these tenants from social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2012) and broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), by engaging in an intervention focused reappraising job search anxiety as excitement, it is likely that individuals in the intervention group (versus the control group) will experience increased confidence in their ability to approach others about their search by viewing their social circle as larger and more likely to help them find employment. I therefore propose the following:

Hypothesis 2: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) and networking self-efficacy.

Linking Creative Job Search and Networking Self-Efficacy with Job Search Effort

As positive affect increases individual’s perceptions of their self-efficacy, the theoretical causal chain championed by the social cognitive theory dictates that self-efficacy increases self-regulatory behavior (Bandura, 1991; 2001). As noted above, this theorizing has been supported across multiple job search studies (e.g., Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Lui, Wang, et al., 2014). However, a limitation of this line of research is that it has predominantly focused on job search behavior self-efficacy and job search outcome self-efficacy, and how these relate to overall measures of effort (e.g., Kim et al., 2019). While promising, this research lacks nuance that would be beneficial to further delineate, given the potential for different relationships to emerge between different types of self-efficacy and different types of job search effort.

Initial research by Crossley and Highhouse (2005) established three different types of job search strategies: exploratory, focused, and haphazard. Exploratory job search strategies denote looking at several potential employment options, such that one has a goal in mind, but is open to different opportunities that may arise (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005). Focused job search

strategies refer to a concentrated search for a set of specific employment opportunities, wherein individuals apply for jobs that they are both qualified for, and interested in, at employers they identified as desirable (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005). Finally, haphazard job search strategies refer to passive information gathering of employment opportunities both within and outside of one's prior employment and educational qualifications, wherein individuals switch job search tactics and embrace a trial-and-error approach (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005).³

According to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997; 2001), self-efficacy beliefs impact goal directed behavior. Supporting this tenet, previous research has found that self-efficacy is associated with increased intensity of job search (Blau, 1994; Crossley & Stanton, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 1999; 2000). In addition to the effects of self-efficacy on how much effort individuals exert, social cognitive theory also portends that self-efficacy beliefs may impact the adaptations in behavior that occurs under experiences of adversity (e.g., job seeking; Bandura, 2001; Wood & Bandura, 1989). Initial research by Koen et al. (2010) affirms that self-efficacy may impact the *types* of job search effort job seeker's engage in. Specifically, Koen et al. (2010) found that career confidence—feelings of self-efficacy related to the ability to successfully engage in activities that facilitate achieving one's career goals—positively related to exploratory job search strategy. Expanding this research further, I investigated the impact of creative job search and networking self-efficacies to explore whether different types of self-efficacy display similar or different relationships with exploratory, focused, and haphazard job search effort.

Indeed, creative self-efficacy is likely to influence the types of job search effort that job

³ These three dimensions as studied in the job search literature denote the general behavioral path individuals utilize, but may not necessarily capture how job search effort was directed (van Hooft et al., 2013). Items for the job search strategies developed by Crossley and Highhouse (2005) focus predominantly on information gathering, with the implication being that effort would be directed towards positions on which information is gathered. Addressing this limitation, Chawla (2020) adapted their items to focus on three distinct forms of job search effort that aligned with the strategies identified by Crossley and Highhouse (2005). Given that I am drawing from the social cognitive theory, I measured job search effort, rather than strategies, to better capture self-regulatory behavior.

seekers engage in. Generally, individuals who exhibit creative self-efficacy tend to conduct broader searches for information (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Further, divergent thinking associated with creative self-efficacy is likely to facilitate individuals pursuing jobs that they may not have originally considered as a form of innovation in a constrained and/or competitive job market (Mathison & Bronnick, 2009; Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). As such, creative job search self-efficacy should be positively related to exploratory job search effort week-to-week.

Yet, there may be downsides to creative self-efficacy during the job search. For instance, given the broadening of cognition associated with creative job search self-efficacy, individuals who experience creative job search self-efficacy may be less likely to engage in focused job search effort, opting to pursue more novel careers they had not previously considered rather than a specific set of employers and positions they decided upon beforehand (e.g., Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Liao et al., 2010). Further, because creative self-efficacy is associated with idea generation, including seeking out new methods of accomplishing a task (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016), it is possible that creative job search self-efficacy may also positively relate to haphazard job search effort, as individuals switch tactics and apply to positions at random reflecting a creative, yet potentially detrimental, employment pursuit. As such, I hypothesize the following relations between creative job search self-efficacy and different forms of job search effort:

Hypothesis 3: On a weekly basis, creative job search self-efficacy will be positively related to (a) exploratory job search effort, (b) negatively related to focused job search effort, and (c) positively related to haphazard job search effort.

Previous research on networking self-efficacy has explored its effects on discrete job search behaviors (Van Hoye et al., 2009). Van Hoye et al. (2009) surveyed 188 ethnic minority women in the Netherlands across two surveys over three months and found that higher networking self-efficacy at Time 1 was positively related to job search behaviors reported at

Time 2, including contacting potential employers and employment agencies, as well as looking through job ads. These effects on job search behaviors highlight that networking self-efficacy encourages individuals to communicate with potential employers, which may also include speaking to general acquaintances and close friends and family (Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020). Given that networking self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to leverage networking in their job search, and that effective utilization of one's network in the job search requires both the ability to directly communicate what one is looking for while also being open to suggestions about potential job openings, networking self-efficacy should promote engagement in focused and exploratory job search effort. Conversely, because networking self-efficacy refers to a specific pursuit of job leads and opportunities via personal and professional contacts, individuals who experience higher networking self-efficacy should be less likely to engage in haphazard job search effort. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 4: On a weekly basis, networking self-efficacy will be positively related to (a) exploratory job search effort and (b) focused job search effort, and (c) negatively related to haphazard job search effort.

Linking Types of Job Search Effort with Post-Interview Perceived Fit

Each of the aforementioned types of effort could impact whether job seekers have good fit with the organizations as captured with post-interview perceived fit. Research that looks at the unfolding nature of the job search (i.e., the sequential relationships between cognition, emotion, behaviors, and outcomes) has focused on predominantly on number of interviews and number of job offers (da Motta Viegas et al., 2018; Kanfer et al., 2001; Wanberg, 2020). While studies have looked at job seeker fit with the subsequent hiring organization (e.g., Bretz et al., 1993; Cable & Judge, 1994; 1996; Saks & Ashforth, 2002), to date, job search scholarship has not addressed fit perceptions of interviewees with the organization as an outcome of their specific job search

effort. Such information is practically useful, as to the extent individuals engage in a form of job search effort that results in interviews they perceive as exhibiting a high level of fit, they can decisively utilize that strategic form of effort for their eventual placement in a good fitting position and organization. By looking at fit at the time of the interview, rather than fit after hiring, scholars may gain a better understanding of the successfulness of different types of job search effort in predicting perceptions of fit *during* the job search. This distinction may be important, as individuals may go on high quality interviews, but perhaps due to extraneous circumstances, such as the financial pressure to be employed (e.g., Froidevaux et al., 2020), may prematurely accept a position at an organization, and/or for a position, that is not a good fit.

Interestingly, results to date of the downstream consequences of different types of job search effort are inconclusive. For instance, Koen et al. (2010) found that focused and exploratory job search strategies positively predicted the number of job offers individuals received, but only exploratory job search strategy predicted re-employment quality, and this relationship was negative (Koen et al., 2010). Similarly, Crossley and Highhouse (2005) found that an exploratory job search strategy positively predicted number of offers, while a haphazard job search strategy negatively predicted number of offers, and focused job search strategy was unrelated to job offers. Additionally, a focused job search strategy was positively related to job satisfaction, while a haphazard job search strategy was negatively related to job satisfaction, and an exploratory job search strategy was unrelated to satisfaction (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005). However, speaking more directly to my ideas, Affum-Osei et al.'s (2021) research of 137 job seekers in Ghana found that an exploratory job search strategy was positively related to person-organization fit and demands-abilities fit, and unrelated to needs-supplies fit with the job seeker's new jobs. Focused job search strategy was positively related to all three dimensions of

fit, while haphazard job search strategy was negatively related to demands-abilities fit and person-organization fit, and unrelated to needs-supplies fit (Affum-Osei et al., 2021).

The aforementioned research is somewhat inconclusive in regard to the impact of the different types of job search strategies. The mixed findings, especially regarding the exploratory job search strategy, may be due to the measurement of post-hiring perceptions of fit. Job seekers are likely to go on a number of interviews prior to receiving an offer (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; Kanfer et al., 2001), but whether job seekers perceive those interviews as being high or low quality may be the result of the type of job search effort strategies that individuals engaged in that week. Thus, I look at three specific types of subjective fit perceptions of job seekers with interviewing organizations, all of which fall under the heading of post-interview perceived fit: (1) person-organization fit, defined as the extent to which individual values are congruent with the hiring organizations values; (2) demands-abilities fit, defined as the congruence between the demands of a job and an individual's abilities; and (3) needs-supplies fit, defined as the rewards provided by a job in return for one's service (e.g., salary, recognition, promotion opportunities; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). I examine these three dimensions separately each week (see Measures and Analytic Approach below), as each dimension is presumed to reflect different aspects of having a high quality job (Kristof, 1996; Swider et al., 2015; Wanberg et al., 2020).

For exploratory job search effort, because individuals have an idea of what they desire out of the job search, but are more flexible in how they pursue their desired outcomes (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Koen et al., 2010), I anticipate a positive relationship between exploratory job search effort and subsequent post-interview perceived fit later in the same week. Further, because job seekers who engage in focused job search effort have a clear idea of what type of position they want and what type of organization they would like to work for (Crossley &

Highhouse, 2005; Koen et al., 2010), I anticipate that focused job search effort will also exhibit a positive relationship with post-interview perceived fit. Finally, given that haphazard job search effort is characterized by a lack of a definitive plan, purpose, or pattern (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Koen et al., 2010), I anticipate that haphazard job search effort will be negatively related to post-interview perceived fit. Given these characteristics of the different types of job search effort strategies, I predict the following:

Hypothesis 5: On a weekly basis, focused job search effort will be positively related to post-interview perceived fit.

Hypothesis 6: On a weekly basis, exploratory job search effort will be positively related to post-interview perceived fit.

Hypothesis 7: On a weekly basis, haphazard job search effort will be negatively related to post-interview perceived fit.

Combined, the aforementioned hypotheses suggest serial mediation of my within-person intervention on post-interview perceived fit via its effects on creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy. As such, I position the following serial mediation hypotheses:

Hypothesis 8: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via creative job search self-efficacy and exploratory job search effort.

Hypothesis 9: On a weekly basis, there will be a negative relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via creative job search self-efficacy and (reduced) focused job search effort.

Hypothesis 10: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via creative job search self-efficacy and (reduced) haphazard job search effort.

Hypothesis 11: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via networking self-efficacy and exploratory job search effort.

Hypothesis 12: On a weekly basis, there will be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via networking

self-efficacy and focused job search effort.

Hypothesis 13: On a weekly basis, there will be a negative relationship between being in the intervention (vs. the control condition) on post-interview perceived fit via networking self-efficacy and (reduced) haphazard job search effort.

Understanding the Moderating Role of Job Search Goal Clarity

Finally, while I hypothesize that a weekly job search intervention focused on reappraising job seeker's anxiety to excitement will be beneficial, it is possible that individual differences between job seekers may affect the strength of the within-person relationship between the job search intervention and experiences of creative and networking job search self-efficacy.

Generally speaking, theory and empirical research suggests that experiencing ambiguity related to a particular task may increase feelings of anxiety, thus undermining performance (e.g., Cheng & McCarthy, 2018; Rodell & Judge, 2009), suggesting that having clarity in one's goal or task pursuit is likely to be important (e.g., King et al., 2006). Indeed, social cognitive theory suggests that goals are important for guiding and motivating self-regulatory behaviors (Bandura, 1991; Kanfer et al., 2001), meaning that to understand the effectiveness of my within-person intervention, it is crucial to understand the goals of job seekers. Fitting these ideas, job search goal clarity represents job seekers' clarity surrounding their objectives for their job search, their understanding of the type of career they want, and their desired job position (Wanberg et al., 2002; Zikic & Saks, 2009). When individuals are reappraising their job search anxiety as job search excitement and harnessing the tension between where they are in their job search and where they want to be, their clarity surrounding what they want for their professional career is likely to affect the relationship between excitement and both forms of self-efficacy.

For creative job search self-efficacy, higher levels of job search goal clarity are likely to enhance the positive within-person relationship of my intervention on this self-efficacy belief.

Reappraising anxiety as excitement is likely to stimulate individual's experiences of creative self-efficacy, and broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001) dictates that it does so by broadening individual's cognitions, allowing them to see a myriad of possible alternatives that stimulates their creative tendencies. When job search goal clarity is higher (as opposed to lower), it may augment the effects of excitement on creative self-efficacy by increasing the extent to which excitement effectively triggers consideration of novel employment alternatives that facilitate the achievement of individual's career goals, as individuals are less likely to perceive alternatives as being uncertain and a more likely to consider them aligned with their job search goals. In support of this, Ekvall (1996) found that goal clarity was positively related to innovativeness, with Sacramento et al. (2013) also finding that individuals who have clearer goals are likely to employ a greater number of strategies to achieve those goals. Therefore, given that job search goal clarity may enhance experiences of positive affect (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000) and innovativeness (e.g., Ekvall, 1996; Sacramento et al., 2013), individuals who have higher levels of job search goal clarity are more likely to experience benefits from my intervention, strengthening the positive relation with creative job search self-efficacy. As such, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 14: Job search goal clarity will moderate the weekly relationship between the intervention and creative job search self-efficacy, such that the positively relationship between the intervention and creative job search self-efficacy will be stronger when job search goal clarity is higher versus when it is lower.

Similarly, higher (versus lower) levels of job seeker goal clarity should strengthen the relationship between my intervention and weekly networking self-efficacy. Goal clarity is associated with the ability to engage in focused communication (Bang et al., 2010), a critical component of effective networking. When networking with others, a lack of job search goal clarity may result in rambling or off-topic communication (Mosvick & Nelson, 1996). Because excitement is, in part, characterized by an optimism towards the future (Brooks, 2014), and

networking self-efficacy represents confidence in one's ability to use their networks to find a job by communicating about job search goals with others, job search goal clarity should strengthen the relation between individual's weekly experiences of excitement driven by my intervention and their proximal experience of networking self-efficacy. Theoretically, this is likely to occur because individuals who have higher levels job search goal clarity have a clearer understanding of what they wish their future employment to be, allowing them to experience a higher level of affective arousal when considering achieving this desired goal. In turn, they likely feel more confident in their ability to communicate these clear goals with other in order to facilitate the achievement of their job search goal (e.g., Côté et al., 2006). Therefore, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 15: Job search goal clarity will moderate the weekly relationship between the intervention and networking self-efficacy, such that the positive relationship between the intervention and networking self-efficacy will be stronger when job search goal clarity is higher versus when it is lower.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The sample consisted of new labor market entrants from the business school of a large public university in the Southwestern United States (for similar samples, see: Chawla et al., 2019; da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016; MacGowan et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2013). In order to be eligible, participants had to be at least 18 years of age and currently looking for a full, part-time, or full or part-time position, and that position could be either a job, internship, or both, while enrolled in a required upper level course. Recruitment began at the start of the Fall 2021 semester, wherein eligible individuals were asked to complete an opt-in survey including all Level 2 measures (i.e., goal clarity), as well as demographics and job search characteristics (e.g., how many weeks they have been job seeking, how far into the process they are [early, middle, or

late]). Approximately two weeks later, participants were sent a survey twice a week for 10 weeks of their job search. These weekly surveys began the week before the career fair—a key temporal landmark for student job seekers (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016; Kanar et al., 2015). In exchange for participating, students were rewarded one point of extra credit for completing the opt-in survey, and an additional point of extra credit for completing both of the weekly surveys each week (i.e., one point for both surveys completed in a given week, or 10 points total). Students who completed all 21 surveys were given two extra credit points (i.e., 13 total extra credit points) and were entered into a raffle to win one of five \$100 Amazon gift cards.

Given the nature of my study (i.e., a within-person field experiment), I administered two weekly surveys—one at the beginning of the week (containing the intervention) and one at the end of the week. The decision to administer the intervention (or control condition) once a week, as well as the survey capturing relevant job search behavior and outcomes, aligns with research pertaining to new labor market entrants (e.g., Chawla et al., 2019; da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014), where weekly timeframes are most suitable for two reasons. First, this segment of job seekers may have several demands competing for their time and attention (e.g., schoolwork, part-time employment), and repeated daily assessments are likely to be a strain given their other obligations (da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). Second, from a theoretical and temporal standpoint, given the unfolding nature of job search (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2018; van Hooft et al., 2020) the receipt of interviews, a critical outcome variable, is unlikely to occur daily during the job search for new labor market entrants. Therefore, focusing on how processes stemming from my intervention unfold over a weekly sampling time frame is preferable.

Importantly, there are several ways to structure within-person interventions (e.g., Bono et al., 2013; Foulk et al., 2018; Jennings et al., 2021; Lanaj et al., 2018; Song et al., 2018). For

example, in their manipulation of leader self-reflection, Lanaj and colleagues (2018) assigned participants to either the control or experimental condition based on a constrained within-person randomized matrix in order to administer the experimental and control days randomly within and between participants. Others have similarly taken such an approach, with Jennings et al. (2021) assigning participants to a “best possible leader self” intervention or a control condition over 10 days (see also Foulk et al., 2018). Here, “[a]cross the 10 days of the daily study, participants received each of the five intervention versions and each of the five control versions only one time, and their particular order was random within and across people. Further, in this design, half of the participants were in the intervention condition and half of the participants were in the control condition each day of the study” (Jennings et al., 2021, p. 18). This counters scholars who have not randomized within- and between-persons, instead focusing on people spending an entire week in an intervention or a control condition, and switching halfway through the study (e.g., Bono et al., 2013; Song et al., 2018). For example, Song et al. (2018) administered two different interventions over three weeks. The first week represented the control week, within which no interventions were administered. In the second week, half of the participants did a perspective intervention, and the other half did a pro-social recall intervention. In the third week, the half of participants who did the perspective intervention were shifted to the pro-social recall condition and vice-versa. In evaluating these options, I followed the precedent set forth by Lanaj et al. (2018; see also Foulk et al., 2018; Jennings et al., 2021) in order to have a more rigorous within-person intervention (e.g., participants seeing the same intervention every week for 10 weeks could create concerns tied to learning or habituation effects; Gabriel et al., 2019).

The first weekly survey—which included the intervention or control condition—was sent out on Sunday morning at 8:00AM and participants had until Monday night at 11:59PM to

complete it. At the beginning of this survey, participants were first presented with a measure of their current job search anxiety and excitement, among other emotions. Next, half of the participants received the intervention and the other half received the control condition. Each week, a new intervention/control condition distribution was created, randomly assigning participants to the intervention or control and ensuring per Jennings et al. (2021) that each person has five intervention weeks and five control weeks, with the number of intervention and control weeks equal across all people for a given week. After the intervention, there was another measure of anxiety and excitement as a manipulation check, looking for higher excitement in the intervention versus the control condition, and lower anxiety in the intervention versus the control conditions. Per my hypotheses and other within-person interventions (e.g., Foulk et al., 2018), these variables were not initially planned to be a formal part of my model, though—as shown in supplemental analyses below—these later became incorporated in exploring alternative models. In addition to measuring anxiety and excitement, the first weekly survey also included the measures of creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy, as the reappraisal manipulation should influence both forms of self-efficacy per Hypotheses 1 and 2.

The second weekly survey was sent out on Friday morning at 8:00AM and was open until Saturday night at 11:59PM. Temporally separating this survey from the intervention (or control) allowed me to see how the intervention early in the week affected job search experiences later in the week. The second survey included types of job search strategies, job search creativity, and post-interview perceived fit. I also included a measure of job offers for completeness, though I did not have any weekly effects hypothesized for this outcome. To further ensure high quality data, job seekers who indicated that they received an offer were asked to indicate if they were still searching for a job next week. Additionally, participants were asked if they had stopped their

job search in order to pursue an alternate career path (i.e., military, graduate school). Individuals who indicated that they had stopped searching (e.g., accepted a job offer, pursued an alternative career path) were removed and placed into alternative surveys in order to continue to earn extra credit. Only data up until the point of stopping their job search was utilized.

To align with best practices in within-person research, my goal was to recruit at least 100 job seekers to complete at least 850 weekly surveys. These numbers supersede what is recommended (for a review, see: Gabriel et al., 2019), while also taking into account issues with attrition that may occur as participants find employment and exit the study. These sample sizes are also on par with within-person research in the job search literature, where samples range from 381–1,052 at Level 1 and 93–184 at Level 2 (e.g., Chawla et al., 2019; da Motta Veiga et al., 2020; da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2018; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014; Sun et al., 2013). In line with these expectations, 199 job seekers opt-in to my study. Of these, 106 completed at least three full weeks of surveys, resulting in a total 745 full weeks of data out of a possible 1060 (an average of 7.03 weeks per job seeker; 70.28% completion rate). The majority of participants were women (56.6%; 43.4% men) with an average participant age of 21.16 years old ($SD = 0.57$). The sample's ethnicity was predominantly White or European American (74.5%), as well as Hispanic (17.9%), Asian or Asian American (11.3%), Black or African American (2.8%), with one individual identifying as Iranian American, and another individual identifying as Middle Eastern. The average GPA of participants was 3.66 ($SD = 0.23$). Participants indicated they were predominantly looking for a full-time position (73.6%), with fewer looking for part-time positions (8.5%); additionally, some participants indicated that they were looking for either full- or part-time positions (17.9%). Further the majority of participants were looking for a job (68.9%) versus an internship (11.3%); 19.8% indicated they were considering a job or an

internship. Finally, most participants in the study indicated that they were in the beginning stage of their job search (59.4%) compared to the middle (34.0%) or late stage (6.6%).

Measures (see Appendix A for Complete Items)

Job Search Clarity (Level 2)

Job search clarity was measured with four items adapted from Wanberg et al. (2002). All items were rated on a five-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Individuals were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each item *in general*, capturing a stable, trait-level appraisal. Example items include “I have a clear idea of the type of job I want to find;” and “I need help planning a career.” Reliability for this measure is .86.

Anxiety to Excitement Within-Person Intervention (Level 1; Sunday-Monday Survey)

The within-person intervention for reappraising anxiety as excitement is based off Ford et al.’s (2019) emotion reappraisal manipulation. In their work, Ford et al. (2019) used reappraisal techniques to help participants regulate negative emotions experienced after the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. In their manipulation, individuals were asked to watch a 2-minute film with news clips summarizing Donald Trump’s first 100 days in office (i.e., a negative emotion induction). After watching the film, individuals were given an emotion reappraisal manipulation aimed at enhancing individual effort (and success) in reappraising the negative emotions experienced from viewing the film. Individual who engaged in reappraisal reported lower levels of negative emotions (e.g., anxiety) compared to individual in the control condition. These findings suggest that Ford et al. (2019) were able to successfully adjust individual emotional responses using their reappraisal technique, and in particular reduce feelings of anxiety.

Importantly, my work seeks to integrate the findings of Ford et al. (2019) and Brooks (2014) to create an intervention that focuses on reappraising anxiety as excitement during the job

search process, given that these emotions differ in valence, but exhibit similar physiological arousal. However, diverging from Brooks (2014) who used discrete laboratory interventions for her intervention to reappraise anxiety as excitement, like Ford et al. (2019), my intervention seeks to initiate long-term (i.e., lasting for at least several days) shifts in affect that can positively influence behaviors directed towards one's job search. The approach I am adopting also aligns with behavioral medicine that supports the process of writing about one's stressful experiences consistently (e.g., twice a month) and reframing experiences through positive affect journaling in improving emotions and well-being (e.g., Ullrich & Lutgendorf, 2002; Smyth et al., 2018).

Adapting the Ford et al. (2019) intervention for my study for both content and to align more closely with the length of the control condition (see below), during the first weekly survey sent on Sunday morning, participants in the intervention condition read the following:

“This week, we are going to ask you to write a statement (2 paragraphs) regarding why you are **excited** about your job and/or internship search this week. Research shows that experiencing distress (e.g., worry, anxiety) can contribute to worse mental well-being, physical health, and performance. Because of this, it is important to manage these emotions as they relate to the job search. One way is to reconsider or reframe situations in a new way so that the situations are less upsetting and **more exciting**. We know that it can be a challenge to change one's perspective about a situation like this, but we would like you to try. As an example, individuals who feel anxious about public speaking may contemplate something such as the following: “This is experience is exciting because it is an opportunity to grow and become the person I want to be.” There are no right or wrong answers. Simply write why you are excited for your job and/or internship search for the upcoming week.”

In the control condition, also based on Ford et al. (2019), participants were given the instructions below; note that the length of this control matches Ford et al.'s length, and is being left broader than the experimental manipulation in an effort not to prime a particular emotion.

“This week, we are going to ask you to write a statement (2 paragraphs) regarding your thoughts and feelings about your job and/or internship search this week. This can be about anything you are thinking or feeling regarding your upcoming job/internship search this week. You do not need to write about anything in particular. Instead, simply free write your thoughts and feelings about the job search using a “stream of conscious”

approach, writing what comes to mind and not censoring your thoughts or feelings in regard to your job and/or internship search this upcoming week. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply write what you are thinking or feeling regarding your job and/or internship search for the upcoming week.”⁴

Anxiety and Excitement (Level 1; Sunday-Monday Survey)⁵

During the first weekly survey, anxiety and excitement were measured before and after the intervention or control condition. Anxiety was measured using four items based on Brooks and Schweitzer (2011; see also, Brooks, 2014): “Anxious;” “Apprehensive;” “Worried;” and “Nervous.” Excitement was measured using two items from Brooks (2014) including “Excited;” and “Enthusiastic.” Additionally, to more closely align with the four items being used to measure anxiety, I also included two additional items from Van Katwyk et al. (2000) that are similar in regard to arousal and valence: “Energetic” and “Ecstatic.” Prior to and after the intervention or control, participants rated their feelings of anxiety and excitement *in thinking about their upcoming week of job/internship seeking* (1 = not at all; 5 = a great deal). These measures are used for manipulation checks for the intervention. The estimated within-person reliability was

⁴ Given the newness of this intervention to the study of job seekers, prior to my focal study I conducted a pilot test of this manipulation using Prolific Academic to capture a sample of 195 student job seekers. Participants average age was 21.95 ($SD = 4.20$). These job seekers identified as male (48.5%), female (49.0%), or non-binary (1.5%), or preferred not to say (1%). The racial demographics of respondents were 57.7% White, 16.3% Hispanic, 20.9% Asian or Asian American, 11.7% Black or African American, 1% Pacific Islander, and 1% Native American. 43.9% of participants were searching for a job, while 42.3% were searching for a job or internship, and 13.3% were solely searching for an internship. Further, 35.2% were looking for full-time position versus 35.7% searching for full or part-time positions and 28.1% searching for part-time positions. Finally, 43.9% indicated they were in the early stage of their job search, compared to 45.9% in the middle stage and 9.7% in the late stage. Participants were randomly assigned to either the intervention condition ($n = 96$) or the control condition ($n = 99$). Participants in the intervention did not show significant differences on pre-intervention anxiety ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .99$) versus the control condition ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .96$; $t_{(193)} = -.47$, $p = .637$). Additionally, participants in the intervention did not show significant differences on pre-intervention excitement ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.13$) compared to the control condition ($M = 2.57$, $SD = .88$; $t_{(193)} = .03$, $p = .974$). Post-manipulation, those in the intervention condition reported significantly less anxiety post-intervention ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.00$) than those in the control ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.04$; $t_{(193)} = -3.15$, $p = .002$). Further, anxiety in the intervention group decreased ($t_{(95)} = 5.68$, $p < .001$), while anxiety in the control group was unchanged ($t_{(98)} = -.13$, $p = .901$). Further, those in the intervention reported more excitement post-intervention ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.13$) versus those in the control ($M = 2.31$, $SD = .98$; $t_{(193)} = 3.70$, $p < .001$). Excitement in the intervention group increased pre- to post-intervention ($t_{(95)} = -5.04$, $p < .001$), while excitement in the control group actually decreased ($t_{(98)} = 4.51$, $p < .001$). Combined, these results offered preliminary support that the intervention was beneficial affectively by promoting increases in excitement and decreases in anxiety.

⁵ Anxiety and excitement were also assessed in the Friday-Saturday survey, but not included in analyses.

.94 for the pre-measure of excitement and .92 for the pre-measure of anxiety; for the post-measures, the estimated within-person reliability of excitement was .94 and .91 for anxiety.

Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy (Level 1; Sunday-Monday Survey)

Creative job search self-efficacy was measured using three items adapted from Teirney and Farmer (2002) to capture creativity during job search. Participants indicated their confidence regarding the following items (1 = *not at all confident*; 5 = *highly confident*) during their upcoming week of job seeking: “I have confidence in my ability to solve problems creatively;” “I feel that I am good at generating novel ideas;” and “I can meet most of the creative challenges in my job search.” The estimated within-person reliability for this measure was .85.

Networking Self-Efficacy (Level 1; Sunday-Monday Survey)

Networking self-efficacy was measured using five items from Wanberg, van Hooft, et al. (2020); Wanberg, van Hooft, et al. (2020) originally adapted the items from van Ryn and Vinokur (1992). Participants rated their confidence about engaging in different networking activities during their upcoming week of job/internship seeking (1 = *not at all confident*; 5 = *highly confident*). Items included: “using networking in my job search;” “informing everyone I know well that I am looking for work;” “preparing an ‘elevator pitch’ outlining the type of job I am looking for and what I have to offer;” “using networking to expand my target list of companies;” and “using LinkedIn [or another social network such as Handshake] as a tool to assist me in networking.” The estimated within-person reliability was .84.

Job Search Effort (Level 1; Friday-Saturday Survey)

Job search effort was measured using 12 items adapted from Crossley and Highhouse (2005) by Chawla (2020; see also Gabriel et al., 2021) that address focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort (four items per dimension). Individuals rated the extent to which they

engaged in each item *over the last week of job/internship seeking* (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Specifically, *focused job search effort* (estimated within-person reliability = .84) was measured with four items: “I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that looked like what I wanted;” “I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that I was really interested in;” “I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that I knew I would qualify for;” and “I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that aligned with my employment goals.” *Exploratory job search effort* (estimated within-person reliability = .85) was measured using four items: “I focused on/directed effort towards all job/internship opportunities I came across;” “I focused on/directed effort towards all job/internship leads, even long shots;” “I focused on/directed effort towards as many jobs/internships as possible;” and “I focused on/direct effort towards any job/internship regardless of my qualification.” Finally, *haphazard job search effort* (estimated within-person reliability = .78) was measured using four items: “I focused on/directed effort haphazardly toward job/internship openings, even those that didn’t align with my employment goals;” “I focused on/directed effort toward jobs/internships at random, without much consideration for whether I was qualified for them;” “I used a hit-or-miss approach when focusing on/directing effort toward job/internship openings;” and “I did not have a plan when I focused on/directed effort toward job/internship openings.”

Post-Interview Perceived Fit (Level 1; Friday-Saturday Survey)

Typically, job search researchers have studied number of interviews received as a marker of job search success (e.g., Brown et al., 2006; Fang & Saks, 2020; Sun et al., 2013; Turban et al., 2013). However, I posited in this research that it was not just receiving interviews that was important, or operating as a function of improved job search processes stemming from my within-person intervention, but the *quality* of the interviews received (e.g., Cable & DeRue,

2002; Wanberg, van Hooft, et al., 2020). Because of this, I assessed the number of interviews weekly (e.g., “How many phone/in-person/virtual interviews did you have this week? If none, please type 0”) to align with past research, as well as more specific assessments of quality.

Similar to Wanberg, van Hooft, et al. (2020), I used the measure developed by Cable and DeRue (2002) to assess the number of interviews with jobs where employees perceived fit. To assess *post-interview perceived fit*, job seekers who provided a number of interviews equal to or greater than 1 weekly were directed to a second screen that assessed perceived person-organization and person-job (demands-abilities and needs-supplies) fit for the organizations/jobs interviews occurred for. Individuals who report that they received 0 interviews were recorded as missing data, and individuals who reported that they interviewed with one or more organizations reported the number of interviews that they perceived themselves as having fit with as follows:

Post-Interview Perceived Fit —Person-Organization Fit: You indicated that you received [X] interview(s) over the last week of job/internship seeking. In considering the interview(s), how many were with organizations where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between your values and the organization’s values? In none, please type 0.

Post-Interview Perceived Fit —Demands-Abilities Fit: You indicated that you received [X] interviews over the last week of job/internship seeking. Of these interviews, how many were for jobs where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between your abilities and the demands of the job? In none, please type 0.

Post-Interview Perceived Fit —Needs-Supplies Fit: You indicated that you received [X] interviews over the last week of job/internship seeking. Of these interviews, how many were for jobs where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between the things the job provides and what you are looking for in a job? In none, please type 0.

Note that these items for post-interview perceived fit cannot be collapsed into one overall quality measure. For example, a participant who had one interview may perceive that one interview as having person-organization, demands-abilities, and needs-supplies fit; summing post-interview perceived fit interviews quality items, however, would make it look as though that job seeker had three interviews (vs. one interview that fit all three dimensions). As such, I ran

each type of post-interview perceived fit as a separate outcome. I also ran this variable two ways—one in which those who reported 0 interviews have this variable marked as missing, and another version in which those who reported 0 interviews have a 0 per outcome variable.

In addition to the above measure of fit, I also used a more traditional measure of fit (similar to Wanberg, van Hooft et al., 2020) wherein individuals provided a collapsed report of fit perceptions using the Cable and DeRue (2002) Likert-scale measure, for the interview(s) they had during the past week. These items were rated on a five-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). For person-organization fit individuals evaluated three items including “The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that the organization(s) I interviewed with values;” “My personal values match the organization(s) that I interviewed with values and culture;” and “The organization(s) I interviewed with values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.” The estimated within-person reliability for this measure was .86.

For demands-abilities fit individuals rated the following three items: “The match is very good between the demands of the job(s) I interviewed for and my personal skills;” “My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of the job(s) I interviewed for;” and “My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that the job(s) I interviewed for would place on me.” The estimated within-person reliability for demands-abilities fit was .80. Finally, for needs-supplies fit, participants rated three items: “There is a good fit between what the organization(s) I interviewed with offers me and what I am looking for in a job;” “The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by the organization(s) I interviewed with;” and “The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by the organization(s) I interviewed with.” The estimated within-person reliability for needs-supplies fit was .81. Only participants who reported receiving interviews were shown these items (i.e., there

was missing data for any week in which an interview was not received for this variable).

Control Variables

I controlled for several variables at the within-person level of analysis (i.e., at Level 1). For statistical reasons, I controlled for week of the study in order to reduce the possibility of spurious relationships emerging due to time and repeated measurement (Beal & Weiss, 2003). For theoretical reasons, at Level 1 I also controlled for generalized positive affect and negative affect weekly in order to account for the effects of my intervention above and beyond positive and negative affect composites (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020). In the both the first and second survey each week, participants rated items from Russell (2003) to capture all possible quadrants of the affect circumplex *over the last week of job/internship seeking*. The items for positive affect were: “Cheerful;” “Happy;” “Excited;” “Contented;” “Serene;” and “Calm.” The estimated within-person reliability for positive affect was .90 for the beginning of the week survey and .88 for the end of the week survey. For negative affect, the items were: “Upset;” “Distressed;” “Tense;” “Sad;” “Tired;” and “Gloomy.” The estimated within-person reliability for negative affect is .85 for the beginning of the week survey and .85 for the end of the week survey. These were modeled as controls on measures captured during the first and second weekly surveys respectively (e.g., positive and negative affect at the beginning of the week on creative and networking self-efficacy; positive and negative affect at the end of the week on job search effort strategies, post-interview perceived fit).

Additionally, at Level 1 I also controlled for general job search self-efficacy in order to parse out the discrete effects of networking self-efficacy and creative job search self-efficacy above and beyond the more traditional, generalized conceptualization. Job search self-efficacy was measured in the first survey each week using three items adapted from Wilk and Moynihan

(2005): “I am certain that I can perform to my standards on this job search;” “I am confident that I am able to successfully perform my current job search;” and “I feel I have the skills and knowledge necessary to complete my job search effectively.” The estimated within-person reliability for this measure is .83. Importantly, I chose this adaptation for job search self-efficacy as it represents a more generalized appraisal of job search self-efficacy that does not include networking self-efficacy. Indeed, other measures of job search self-efficacy (e.g., Liu, Wang, et al., 2014; Saks et al., 2015; van Ryn & Vinokur, 1992) include items pertaining to self-efficacy regarding the job search broadly, and self-efficacy pertaining to networking specifically. Thus, the use of these previously established scales would have confounded controlling for general self-efficacy on the two tested pathways vis-à-vis overlapping forms of self-efficacy. Similar to my positive and negative affect controls, this is modelled as a control variable on job search effort strategies and post-interview perceived fit later in the week.

At Level 2, I controlled for participant gender and GPA on my ultimate criterion— post-interview perceived fit—as these are standard Level 2 controls for job search studies using new labor market entrants (e.g., Chawla et al., 2019; da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). I also controlled for which condition participants started the study in (i.e., the intervention or the control condition) to ensure no priming occurred due to this initial assignment; this is modeled alongside my cross-level interaction of job search goal clarity (e.g., Song et al., 2018). Further, I coded for quality of the responses provided in the intervention and control conditions (i.e., off-topic responses, responses less than one sentence) and ran the analyses with and without these responses included. Responses remained qualitatively the same with such cases removed, and as such all cases were included in the analyses in order to maximize sample size.

Analytic Approach

Given the non-independence in my data (i.e., weeks nested within people), I tested my hypotheses using multilevel path analysis in Mplus 8 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2015). Prior to testing my hypotheses, I ran two initial analyses. First, I ran a series of null models on all Level 1 variables to establish within-person variability. The percentage of total within person variance is calculated by dividing the amount of within-person variance by the total amount of variance ($\sigma^2 / (\sigma^2 + \tau_{00})$). Previous within-person job search studies have reported within-person variance ranging from 26.70%-78.00% (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016; da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2018; Liu, Wang, et al., 2014; Sun et al., 2013). My focal measures exhibited acceptable within-person variability (24.50%-99.20%, see Table 1), highlighting my within-person focus.

Second, I conducted two multilevel confirmatory factor analyses (MCFA) to determine if my Level 1 and Level 2 measures were exhibiting appropriate fit; all multi-item measures that are being modeled to test my relationships, including control variables, are included. Level 1 items are within-person centered and my Level 2 measure are grand-mean centered (Scott et al., 2010). I evaluated the following fit statistics: chi-squared (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root mean square residual ($SRMR_{within}$ and $SRMR_{between}$). A model is assessed as having good fit when the chi-squared value is low, the CFI and the TLI are around .95, the RMSEA value is below .06 and the $SRMR_{within}$ is less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). First, I examined a thirteen-factor structure including job search goal clarity at Level 2, and the following variables and their respective items at Level 1: creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, focused job search effort, exploratory job search effort, haphazard job search effort, positive affect in the beginning of the week survey and the end of the week survey (controls), negative affect in the beginning of the week survey and the end of the week survey

(controls), and general job search self-efficacy (control). The experimental manipulation and the measures of post-interview perceived fit were excluded from the MCFA given that these are binary measures. The proposed model exhibited acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 2177.74$; $df = 1366$; CFI = .941; TLI = .935; RMSEA = .028; SRMR_{within} = .040; SRMR_{between} = .010). Second, I examined a sixteen-factor structure model of fit using the previously mentioned dimensions, as well as the three Cable and DeRue (2002) measures of post-interview perceived fit for this alternative outcome analysis. This model exhibited also had fairly acceptable fit indices: ($\chi^2 = 2983.56$; $df = 1849$; CFI = .927; TLI = .920; RMSEA = .029; SRMR_{within} = .047; SRMR_{between} = .010).

In order to rule out other possible models, I also examined three alternative MCFAs and compared them to the sixteen-factor model for completeness: Model 1 wherein both creative and networking self-efficacy were collapsed into one factor, with general self-efficacy left as a distinct factor ($\chi^2 = 3420.11$; $df = 1363$; CFI = .900; TLI = .891; RMSEA = .033; SRMR_{within} = .049; SRMR_{between} = .008; Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi^2_{(14)} = 359.69$, $p < .001$); Model 2 wherein all three types of job search strategies were collapsed into one factor ($\chi^2 = 4296.884$; $df = 1876$; CFI = .844; TLI = .832; RMSEA = .042; SRMR_{within} = .063; SRMR_{between} = .008; Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi^2_{(27)} = 968.42$, $p < .001$); and Model 3 wherein all measures of fit from Cable and DeRue (2002) are collapsed on one dimension ($\chi^2 = 3072.82$; $df = 1876$; CFI = .923; TLI = .917; RMSEA = .029; SRMR_{within} = .049; SRMR_{between} = .010; Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi^2_{(27)} = 84.25$, $p < .001$). Overall, the proposed model included all sixteen factors fit the data best relative to the alternative models tested based upon Satorra-Bentler tests.

Given appropriate within-person variability and model fit from my MCFA, I proceeded with conducting a series of multilevel path analyses to examine my hypotheses. More specifically, based upon my hypotheses, I modeled my independent variable (the intervention)

and first-stage mediators (creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy) at the beginning of the week to the three forms of job search effort and post-interview perceived fit later in the same week. Given that post-interview perceived fit is reflected three ways, I ran my model three times, changing the dependent variable for each model to encompass each type of fit. As noted above, each type of fit also has three possibilities—weeks with no interviews recorded as 0, weeks with no interviews recorded as missing data, and weeks with no interviews recorded as missing data and the Likert-scale measure of fit from Cable and DeRue (2002) being used as opposed to a numeric count of interviews. Level 1 predictors are within-person centered to remove variance attributable to between-person factors, such as response tendencies and dispositional variables, which allows for cleaner estimates of the within-person relationships (Enders & Tofighi, 2007). Level 2 variables are grand-mean centered to enhance the interpretability of my cross-level interactions (Enders & Tofighi, 2007). Level 1 substantive relationships were modeled as random (Tofighi et al., 2013), and variables at the same point in the model (e.g., networking and creative self-efficacy; all three forms of job search effort) were allowed to co-vary to appropriately model error. To account for changes over time in my variables, I controlled for week of the study. Control variables and direct effects at Level 1 (i.e., the direct effect of generalized positive and negative affect on job search strategies) are modeled as fixed to help reduce model complexity (e.g., Wang et al., 2013)⁶.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations of focal study variables are presented in Table 2. The results of the simultaneous multilevel path analyses are presented separately for

⁶ All Level 1 direct effects were modeled with and without control variables for the proposed model including person-organization fit as the dependent variables (Table 3). All relationships were qualitatively the same, with one exception: a significant negative effect emerged of creative job search self-efficacy on haphazard effort ($\gamma = -.20, p = .015$). Given that the direct effects were generally the same, I retained all control variables in subsequent analyses.

each dependent variable in Table 3 (Person-Organization Fit), Table 4 (Demands-Abilities Fit), and Table 5 (Needs-Supplies Fit). As the conclusions are quite similar for path models with each dependent variable, in my hypothesis reporting below, I focus on the main effects that were initially generated with person-organization fit as an outcome of interest (see Table 3). Further, as was anticipated, there was a significant amount of missing data on my outcome variables, as not all participants had interviews week-to-week. Given that maximum likelihood estimation in Mplus defaults to listwise deletion, this resulted in much smaller sample sizes for these analyses, with a Level 1 sample size of 257 (vs. 745) and a Level 2 sample size of 90 (vs. 106). As detailed below, this likely affected the ability to detect significant effects, which I later accounted for when running a series of theoretically derived alternative models from my data.

To ensure the efficacy of my intervention, I conducted a manipulation check by running a series of paired-sample t-tests on pre- and post-manipulation anxiety and excitement during weeks of the intervention condition ($n = 372$) and weeks of the control condition ($n = 373$), respectively. During weeks of the intervention, although participants in the intervention did not show a significant decrease in pre-intervention anxiety ($M = 2.31, SD = 1.16$) versus post-intervention anxiety ($M = 2.30, SD = 1.15; t_{(371)} = .10, p = .924$), they did exhibit a significant increase in pre-intervention excitement ($M = 2.55, SD = 1.12$) versus post intervention excitement ($M = 2.62, SD = 1.09; t_{(371)} = -2.57, p = .011$). In the control condition, individuals did not display significant differences in either pre-anxiety ($M = 2.37, SD = 1.18$) compared to post-anxiety ($M = 2.40, SD = 1.16; t_{(372)} = -1.03, p = .303$), or in pre-excitement ($M = 2.56, SD = 1.07$) compared to post-excitement ($M = 2.51, SD = 1.12; t_{(372)} = 1.57, p = .118$). Taken together, these results highlight the effectiveness of the intervention in stimulating job search excitement compared to the control condition, though these results of course raise questions as to whether

anxiety levels can be effectively lowered with the intervention as designed. Nonetheless, given my central aims to explore if my intervention could promote gains for job seekers by providing a boost in excitement, I proceeded to test my hypothesized model as planned.

Starting with the effects of my weekly intervention, Hypothesis 1 proposed that, on a weekly basis, there would be a positive relationship between being in the intervention (versus the control condition) and creative job search self-efficacy. This relationship exhibited a non-significant relationship ($\gamma = .05, p = .619$), and thus Hypothesis 1 was unsupported. Hypothesis 2 proposed that being in the intervention (versus the control condition) would be positively related to networking self-efficacy. Hypothesis 2 was also unsupported, as the relationship between the intervention and networking self-efficacy was non-significant ($\gamma = -.00, p = .994$).

Turning to effects stemming from both forms of self-efficacy, Hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c then proposed that creative job search self-efficacy would be positively related to (a) exploratory job search effort and (c) haphazard job search effort, but negatively related to (b) focused job search effort. Each hypothesis was unsupported as creative job search self-efficacy was unrelated to (a) exploratory job search effort ($\gamma = .05, p = .572$), (b) focused job search effort ($\gamma = .08, p = .304$), and (c) haphazard job search effort ($\gamma = -.15, p = .069$). Further, Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c, proposed that networking self-efficacy would be positively related to (a) exploratory job search effort and (b) focused job search effort, but negatively related to (c) haphazard job search effort. Networking self-efficacy exhibited non-significant relationships with (a) exploratory job search effort ($\gamma = -.06, p = .522$), (b) focused job search effort ($\gamma = .10, p = .526$), and (c) haphazard job search effort ($\gamma = .02, p = .809$). Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c, were unsupported.

Turning to the dimensions of interview fit, Hypothesis 5 proposed that on a weekly basis, focused job search effort would be positively related to post-interview perceived fit, including

person-organization fit (Table 3), demands-abilities fit (Table 4), and needs-supplies fit (Table 5). Each fit dimension was modeled in separate analyses as the dependent variable. Hypothesis 5 was not supported, as focused job search effort was unrelated to person-organization fit ($\gamma = -.06$, $p = .829$), demands-abilities fit ($\gamma = -.08$, $p = .568$), and needs-supplies fit ($\gamma = -.07$, $p = .900$). Further, Hypothesis 6 suggested that on a weekly basis, exploratory job search effort would be positively related to all three forms of post-interview perceived fit. However, exploratory effort was ultimately unrelated to person-organization fit ($\gamma = .14$, $p = .318$), demands-abilities fit ($\gamma = .14$, $p = .303$), and needs-supplies fit ($\gamma = .09$, $p = .590$). Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was unsupported. The final hypothesis regarding direct effects were presented in Hypothesis 7 and suggested that haphazard job search effort would be negatively related to person-organization fit, demands-abilities fit, and needs-supplies fit. Analyses indicated that the relationship between haphazard job search effort and person-organization fit ($\gamma = -.17$, $p = .300$), demands-abilities fit ($\gamma = -.11$, $p = .412$), and needs-supplies fit ($\gamma = -.08$, $p = .709$) were all non-significant. As such, Hypothesis 7 was not supported. Given the lack of direct effects in the proposed model, I was precluded from testing my serial mediation hypotheses present in Hypotheses 8-13.

Finally, I tested Hypotheses 14 and 15 to investigate the moderating effects of job search goal clarity. Again, given the similar conclusions across study analyses, I report my model results from Table 3. Hypothesis 14 proposed that job search goal clarity would moderate the weekly relationship between the intervention and creative job search self-efficacy, such that the positive relationship between the intervention and job search goal clarity would be stronger when job search goal clarity was higher versus when it was lower. Hypothesis 14 was not supported, as the result of the analyses showed that there was not a significant moderating effects of job search goal clarity on the relationship between the intervention and creative job search self-efficacy ($\gamma =$

-.01, $p = .945$). Hypothesis 15 stated that the positive relationship between the intervention and networking self-efficacy would be stronger when job search goal clarity was higher versus when it was lower. Analyses showed that there was not a significant moderating effect of job search goal clarity on the relationship between the intervention and networking self-efficacy ($\gamma = .05$, $p = .507$), thus Hypothesis 15 was unsupported. No conditional indirect effects were calculated, as there was no significant moderation, and no main effects for mediation-based tests.

Supplemental Analyses: Alternative Measures of Fit

The original path analyses were tested with the measures of fit based on the single item questions wherein data without a response coded as missing. To account for this, I additionally ran the models with two alternative measures of fit: the Cable and DeRue (2002) multi-item measures and the original items presented in the hypotheses above, but with missing data coded as 0, rather than as missing. The results of the analyses with the Cable and DeRue (2002) measure were qualitatively the same as the original tests of my hypotheses, as all relationships were non-significant (see Tables 6-8). And, the sample size for this analysis was quite small.

Conversely, the test of the model with missing person-environment fit data for the interviews coded as zero brought back a substantial number of cases compared to the two previous forms of fit, increasing the size of the sample from 90 at Level 2 to 106, and from 257 at Level 1 to 745. However, despite the increased sample size, the hypotheses unfortunately remained unsupported with a few exceptions; note that all results remained qualitatively the same across the three sets of analyses detailed in Tables 9-11, so the results are reported from Table 9. Specifically, partial support emerged for Hypothesis 4b, wherein networking self-efficacy exhibited a positive relationship with focused job search effort ($\gamma = .14$, $p = .008$). Further, Hypothesis 7 was partially supported, as exploratory job search effort was positively related to person-organization fit ($\gamma = .13$, $p = .047$) and demands-abilities fit ($\gamma = .14$, $p = .026$),

but not needs-supplies fit ($\gamma = .12, p = .063$). Finally, the relationship between creative job search self-efficacy and haphazard effort also became significant, albeit in the opposite direction of what I hypothesized in Hypothesis 3a ($\gamma = -.12, p = .033$). Combined, these results still provided little support for my hypothesized model, either due to sample size constraints, or—as I will detail below—not directly modeling excitement and anxiety stemming from my intervention.

Supplemental Analyses: Modelling Excitement and Anxiety

Given the lack of results from the hypothesized model and additional analyses of fit, I conducted a number of supplemental analyses in order to better understand the effects of the intervention on participants' weekly job search experiences. More specifically, I conducted a supplemental analysis wherein I formally modeled job seekers' excitement and anxiety as a result of the intervention. Additionally, I made two adjustments to my control variables at Level 1 based on this new model. First, given the strong significant relationship between general job search self-efficacy with both creative job search and networking self-efficacy, respectively, I removed this control variable. Second, given that I now formally model discrete emotions (i.e., anxiety and excitement), I removed controls for generalized positive and negative affect. Instead, I controlled for the effects of pre-intervention excitement and anxiety on post-intervention excitement and anxiety as well as on creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy in order to better ascertain the effects of the intervention.

Beyond these adjustments, I also reconsidered my outcome variables. In order to more fully understand the effects of networking self-efficacy and creative job search self-efficacy on different types of effort, I also included dream job search effort as a dependent variable in subsequent analyses (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021). Additionally, given the sample size concerns associated with modeling dimensions of fit, while of theoretical interest, I decided to remove this variable from these supplemental analyses, concluding my model at the types of effort enacted

weekly similar to Gabriel et al. (2021; see also da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). A revised version of my model based on these changes can be found in Figure 2, with results for these analyses in Table 12. My analytic approach was consistent with the approach detailed above.

As shown in Table 12, the intervention had a positive significant effect on excitement ($\gamma = .11, p = .013$) controlling for pre-intervention excitement, and a negative, but non-significant, effect on anxiety ($\gamma = -.04, p = .330$) controlling for pre-intervention anxiety. In turn, post-intervention excitement had a positive and significant effect on both creative job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = .25, p = .000$) and networking self-efficacy ($\gamma = .28, p = .000$) later in the same week. Conversely, anxiety had a significant negative effect on creative job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.12, p = .014$) and networking self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.11, p = .015$). In turn, creative job search self-efficacy was not significant predictor of exploratory job search effort ($\gamma = .07, p = .162$), focused job search effort ($\gamma = .01, p = .891$), or dream job search effort ($\gamma = .05, p = .209$), but did negatively predict haphazard job search effort ($\gamma = -.11, p = .045$); the latter effect again went against the relationship I hypothesized. Given these effects, I calculated serial indirect effect of my intervention on haphazard job search effort via the intervention's effects on excitement and creative self-efficacy. Using a Monte Carlo simulation with 20,000 iterations to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals, results indicated that the serial indirect effect to haphazard job search effort was negative and significant (estimate = $-.003$, 95% CI = $-.0091, -.0003$), as the confidence interval did not include zero. As such, the intervention helped reduce job seekers' use of haphazard job search effort later in the week via excitement and creative self-efficacy.

Further, networking self-efficacy was positively related to both focused job search effort ($\gamma = .11, p = .036$) and dream job search effort ($\gamma = .10, p = .007$), but not significantly related to either haphazard effort ($\gamma = .02, p = .796$) or exploratory effort ($\gamma = .03, p = .624$). Here, I ran the

serial indirect effects of the intervention on focused and dream job search effort via excitement and networking self-efficacy. Results supported the positive effects of the serial indirect effect of the intervention via excitement and networking self-efficacy on dream (estimate = .003, 95% CI = .0012, .0094) and focused (estimate = .003, 95% CI = .0004, .0104) job search effort.

Finally, within this model, I also tested whether job search goal clarity moderated the initial pathways between the intervention and excitement and anxiety. Job search goal clarity did not moderate the relationship between the intervention and excitement ($\gamma = -.05, p = .226$), nor the intervention and anxiety ($\gamma = -.04, p = .344$). For completeness, it also did not moderate the relationships between excitement and creative job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.05, p = .176$), excitement and networking self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.03, p = .405$), anxiety and creative job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.02, p = .512$), or anxiety and networking self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.05, p = .177$).

Despite the non-significant cross-level interactions, these results highlight that, while the intervention may not directly relate to creative job search self-efficacy or networking self-efficacy, it does have the potential to affect individual's weekly excitement for their job search. In turn, this excitement did positively relate to both forms of self-efficacy that then related to subsequent dimensions of job search effort. Thus, these analyses provide greater insight than the hypothesized model into the potential benefits of the intervention, though it is important to note that the intervention did not necessarily reduce anxiety as I would have expected.

Supplemental Analyses: General Defensive Pessimism as an Alternative Moderator

Given that job search goal clarity did not operate as a cross-level moderator, I tested an alternative cross-level moderator in the model specified in Figure 2, modeled alongside job search goal clarity. Specifically, I tested general defensive pessimism as an alternative moderator of the relationship between the intervention and excitement and anxiety. Prior research indicates that general defensive pessimism is utilized by individuals to reduce the negative effects of

anxiety by setting low expectations (Norem, 2001). Individuals who display defense pessimism tend to exhibit relatively high levels of anxiety and are more prepared for failure (Norem & Cantor, 1986). To this end, when individuals higher in general defensive pessimism are encouraged to think optimistically about their job search, they may be more likely to *reduce* performance, as this intervention directly contradicts their coping attitude that couples high anxiety with low expectations for outcomes. Therefore, I tested whether the intervention was less effective for individuals who exhibited higher (vs. lower) general defensive pessimism at the person-level. Results indicated that general defensive pessimism was not a significant moderator of the relationship between the intervention and excitement ($\gamma = .01, p = .832$), nor the relationship between the intervention and anxiety ($\gamma = .00, p = .998$). However, the within-person relationships detailed above remained qualitatively the same. Results are included in Table 12.

Supplemental Analyses: Emotion Reappraisal and Suppression Perspective

Beyond examining the effects of the intervention and anxiety and excitement on creative and networking self-efficacy, I also sought to understand whether the intervention was effective in helping individuals to regulate their emotions during the job search week to week versus engaging in emotional suppression. Prior research has indicated that certain forms of emotion regulation—particularly reappraisal—results in greater positive emotions and reduced negative emotions, as well as improved well-being and interpersonal functioning (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003). Conversely, emotion suppression—a more maladaptive form of emotion regulation—has been found to be associated with greater negative affect and reduced positive affect, well-being, and interpersonal functioning (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003). Given that the emphasis of my intervention was on helping individuals reappraise their anxiety as excitement, I conducted a supplemental analysis where I looked at how the effects of the intervention on excitement and anxiety influenced weekly emotions reappraisal and suppression

as reported in the second weekly survey. In turn, I investigated the relations between reappraisal and emotion suppression and exploratory, focused, haphazard, and dream job search effort. All measures included in this analysis can be found in the Appendix. Results are in Table 13.

Results indicated that the intervention had a positive significant effect on excitement ($\gamma = .11, p = .013$), and a negative, but non-significant, effect on anxiety ($\gamma = -.04, p = .330$), again controlling for pre-intervention levels of excitement and anxiety, respectively. In turn, excitement at the beginning of the week was positively related to reappraisal ($\gamma = .11, p = .004$) and unrelated to emotion suppression ($\gamma = -.04, p = .378$) at the end of the week. Anxiety at the beginning of the week was negatively related to reappraisal ($\gamma = -.09, p = .015$) and positively related to emotion suppression ($\gamma = .13, p = .007$). In turn, reappraisal exhibited a positive relationship with focused job search effort ($\gamma = .12, p = .009$) and dream job search effort ($\gamma = .23, p = .000$), and a non-significant relation with haphazard ($\gamma = -.02, p = .688$) and exploratory job search effort ($\gamma = .10, p = .099$). Conversely, emotion suppression was positively related to haphazard job search effort ($\gamma = .20, p = .000$), and unrelated to focused ($\gamma = .01, p = .905$), exploratory ($\gamma = -.03, p = .612$), and dream job search effort ($\gamma = -.03, p = .315$). Given that the intervention only related to excitement weekly, I calculated serial indirect effects of the intervention on focused and dream job search effort vis-à-vis excitement and reappraisal only again using a Monte Carlo simulation with 20,000 iterations to create the 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. Results indicated that the serial indirect effect to dream job search effort via excitement and reappraisal was significant (estimate = .003, 95% CI = .0007, .0079), as was the indirect effect on focused effort (estimate = .001, 95% CI = .0002, .0043).

Although these results deviate from my initial theorizing, there are several interesting elements to consider. Specifically, these results indicate that the intervention may be effective in

not only enhancing job seeker's weekly excitement, but also job seekers' weekly reappraisal that could help to facilitate adaptive forms of job search effort. Conversely, these analyses also highlight that in weeks where individuals feel anxious about their job search, they may be more likely to engage in emotion suppression, hindering their job search by potentially promoting maladaptive forms of job search effort (i.e., haphazard job search effort). Of course, as the intervention was not significantly related to anxiety, I interpret this result with caution.

Nonetheless, this supplemental analysis aligns with prior research on emotion regulation that supports the benefits of reappraisal and detriments of suppression (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003), and extends this research to understand the effects of emotion regulation on job search.

Supplemental Analyses: A Transactional Theory of Stress Perspective

In addition to the social cognitive theory perspective put forth in development of the hypotheses for this model, an alternative theory—the transactional theory of stress—suggests that the intervention could have an effect on job seekers' appraisal of stress related to job seeking and subsequent coping (e.g., engagement in different types of job search effort) (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987; Perrewé & Zellars, 1999). More specifically, this perspective suggests that whether individuals see the job search as threat or opportunity impacts the stress they experience and how they cope with it (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Individuals who are able to effectively change their perspective via the intervention and experience excitement about their upcoming week of job search should experience a challenge appraisal as opposed to a hindrance appraisal. In turn, those who utilize a challenge appraisal should engage in more adaptive job search effort (i.e., focused, exploratory, and dream job search effort), while those who feel anxiety should have a hindrance perspective that renders maladaptive coping (i.e., haphazard job search effort).

In order to test this perspective, I conducted a supplemental analysis wherein I modeled the effects of the intervention on anxiety and excitement and the effects of these emotions on

challenge and hindrance appraisals of the job search; the measures I used are again in the Appendix, and were all captured in the first survey each week. I then tested whether the challenge and hindrance appraisals were related to different types of job search effort. Results (see Table 14) indicated that the intervention had a positive effect on excitement ($\gamma = .11, p = .014$), and a negative, but non-significant, effect on anxiety ($\gamma = -.04, p = .336$), controlling for pre-intervention excitement and anxiety. In turn, excitement at the beginning of the week was positively related a challenge appraisal at the beginning of the week ($\gamma = .14, p = .001$) and unrelated to hindrance appraisals ($\gamma = .06, p = .253$). Anxiety at the beginning of the week negatively related to challenge appraisals ($\gamma = -.10, p = .024$), and was unrelated to hindrance appraisals ($\gamma = .10, p = .085$). In turn, challenge appraisals were positively related to focused ($\gamma = .15, p = .009$) and dream job search effort ($\gamma = .21, p = .000$), but unrelated to exploratory ($\gamma = .08, p = .086$) and haphazard effort ($\gamma = -.10, p = .084$). Conversely, hindrance appraisals were positively related to haphazard ($\gamma = .13, p = .002$) and dream job search effort ($\gamma = .05, p = .022$), but unrelated to focused ($\gamma = .04, p = .243$) and exploratory job search effort ($\gamma = .06, p = .126$). Again, given that the intervention only related to excitement and excitement only related to challenge appraisals, I calculated serial indirect effects of the intervention on focused and dream job search effort vis-à-vis excitement and challenge appraisals. Results indicated a significant serial indirect effect of the intervention, via weekly excitement and challenge appraisals, on focused (estimate = .003, 95% CI = .0007, .0077) and dream job search effort (estimate = .004, 95% CI = .0009, .0111). In sum, these results provide partial support for the transactional theory of stress perspective, as the intervention related to excitement, and excitement promoted a challenge appraisal associated with the job search. These challenge appraisals, in turn, rendered benefits for job seekers in terms of their focused and dream job search effort. Further, though

unrelated to the intervention and weekly emotions, a hindrance appraisal does lend itself to more maladaptive responses compared to the challenge appraisal, though it did benefit dream job search effort, countering what would be expected from this theoretical perspective.

Discussion

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine how anxiety—a common emotion experienced by job seekers (Gabriel et al., 2021; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004)—could be changed to excitement on a week-to-week basis. Based on social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997; 2001) and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), I proposed that an intervention encouraging job seekers to reframe their job search anxiety as job search excitement would result in a number of beneficial downstream outcomes for job seekers. I anticipated that feeling of excitement about the job search would result in job seekers experiencing broadened cognition and an expanded sense of their social connectedness that would result in increased feelings of confidence, specifically creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy. Next, I theorized that these two forms of self-efficacy would generally enhance the quality of job seekers search effort, with creative self-efficacy relating to an increased propensity to engage in focused and haphazard job search effort, but reduced exploratory job search efforts, while networking self-efficacy would be related to enhanced focused job search effort and exploratory effort and reduced haphazard job search effort. Furthermore, I proposed that each type of job search effort would be related to three types of post-interview perceptions of fit: person-organization fit, demands-abilities fit, and needs-supplies fit. I hypothesized that focused and exploratory job search effort would enhance post-interview perceptions of fit across all dimensions, while haphazard effort would reduce perceptions of fit for all dimensions. Finally, I also predicted that job seekers' job search goal clarity would enhance the effectiveness of the intervention, strengthening the relation between the intervention and both creative job search

self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy. Thus, I proposed a serial moderated mediation model that elucidated the unfolding model of the job search over weeks of job seeking.

Despite my theoretical predictions, across a series of analyses, I did not find evidence to support the effectiveness of my intervention in the model that I originally proposed. In part, this was due to two issues: (1) the lack of interviews and subsequent ratings of fit with the interviewing organizations that resulted in a low number of within-person observation (257 weeks total); and (2) not having measures of excitement and anxiety directly included in tests of my model. Indeed, initial tests revealed that the within-person intervention was not predictive of creative job search self-efficacy, nor networking self-efficacy. In turn, creative job search self-efficacy was unrelated to exploratory, focused, and haphazard job search effort. Similarly, networking self-efficacy was also unrelated to each type of job search effort. Further, each type of job search effort was unrelated to the dimensions of perceived post-interview fit. And, job search goal clarity did not exhibit a moderating effect on the relation between the intervention and either creative job search self-efficacy, nor networking self-efficacy.

Given the lack of main effects of the intervention, I conducted an additional supplemental analysis wherein I formally modeled the relationship between the intervention and post-intervention excitement and anxiety (see Figure 2), among other revisions (i.e., removing fit as an outcome due to low sample size issues at Level 1; adjusting Level 1 control variables; adding dream job search effort). This model indicated that the intervention positively related to excitement when controlling for pre-intervention levels of excitement, though it was unrelated to anxiety. Further, post-intervention excitement was positively related to both creative job search-self efficacy and networking self-efficacy. In turn, creative self-efficacy was negatively related to haphazard job search effort (countering my original theory); networking self-efficacy, on the

other hand, was positively related to focused and dream job search effort. Thus, compared to my model as originally specified, these analyses indicated that the intervention was directly related to excitement, and excitement had the potential to have positive downstream consequences on individuals' different types of job search effort—namely, increasing focused job search effort, which is beneficial for job seekers, and reducing haphazard job search effort, which tends to be detrimental to job seekers (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Gabriel et al., 2021).

Beyond these supplemental analyses, I explored additional theoretically derived models exploring ideas pertaining to my intervention's effects on emotion regulation and challenge/hindrane appraisals. These analyses helped highlight that post-intervention excitement was positively related to both emotion regulation and challenge appraisals of the job search. These analyses provide further support for the potential benefits of the intervention in facilitating healthy coping compared to the strain typically associated with job seeking. Thus, although the model as hypothesized was not supported, these additional analyses offer several theoretical and practical implications, as well as several opportunities for future directions.

Theoretical Implications

Despite the shortcomings of the originally hypothesized model, the supplemental analysis that included excitement and anxiety directly into the model provided theoretical support for both social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997; 2001) and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001). Social cognitive theory posits that individuals experiencing positive emotions should exhibit great confidence in their abilities which in turn should improve their performance; this was supported, as excitement stemming from the intervention positively related to both creative job search self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy. As such, in addition to generalized positive emotions and self-efficacy discussed by Bandura (1997; 2001) and Fredrickson (2001), discrete positive emotions, such as excitement, and discrete forms of

self-efficacy, including creative self-efficacy and networking self-efficacy, play a unique role in facilitating improved performance—in this case, reduced levels of haphazard job search effort and increased focused job search effort.

Indeed, as shown in the supplemental analyses, creative job search self-efficacy reduced haphazard job search effort weekly, suggesting that to the extent individuals felt confident in their ability to be creative in their job search, they were less likely to use a hit or miss approach and search for a job randomly and without structure. Further, to the extent individuals felt confident in their ability to network with others during their job search, they were more likely to direct effort towards positions and organizations that were of great interest to them, or even direct effort towards finding their dream job. As such, these results support and expand the theorizing put forth by Bandura (1997; 2001) and Fredrickson (2001), by broadening the context and content of our understanding of when, and what types, of emotions and self-efficacy play a role in improving performance during the job search. At the within-person level of analysis, the model also provides one of the most comprehensive tests to date in the job search literature of the tenets of social cognitive theory put forth by Bandura and finds support for these tenets that had previously not been tested in full (e.g., da Motta Veiga et al., 2020) or exhibited inconclusive results (e.g., Sun et al., 2013). Further, although my initial theory suggested that creative job search self-efficacy could be problematic in promoting haphazard search, results suggested the opposite effect occurred, suggesting that creative self-efficacy can be adaptive for job seekers.

Further, the supplemental analyses also helped shed light on emotion regulation during the job search. In many ways, it is surprising that emotion regulation has not been better woven into prior job search scholarship, as several studies have highlighted the variety of emotions job seekers are likely to feel (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Tuban, 2014; da Motta Veiga et al., 2020;

Gabriel et al., 2021), and emotion regulation is one way that job seekers can effectively channel such affective signals (Gross, 2002). Indeed, prior research in social psychology has established the benefits of reappraisal and the inhibiting effects of emotion suppression on well-being and performance (e.g., Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003), with some work beginning to highlight the potential benefits of reappraisal for student job seekers (Wang & Yan, 2018; Wang et al., 2017).

In the current research, I was able to develop an intervention that helped facilitate the use of reappraisal, suggesting that my intervention not only modified feelings of excitement, but also help promote more adaptive forms of emotion regulation. Further, integrating the work of Brooks (2014), this proposal highlights how targeting high activation emotions for reappraisal may be beneficial for spurring adaptive job search performance (e.g., focused job search effort). Future research should continue to explore the benefits of different types of emotion regulation for job seekers. For example, Gross (1998) highlights several adaptive (i.e., antecedent-focused) types of emotion regulation beyond reappraisal (or, relatedly, cognitive change), including situation selection (e.g., approaching or avoiding certain events or people), situation modification (e.g., modifying the situation to alter its emotional impact), and attentional deployment (e.g., focusing on non-emotional aspects of the situation). A within-person design, such as the one used in this study, would be advantageous to explore the possible benefits of these strategies.

Finally, my supplemental analyses related to the effects of excitement and anxiety on challenge and hindrance stress provide support for, and extend, theory and research pertaining to the transactional theory of stress and the role of emotion, appraisal, and performance (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; LePine et al., 2005; Mackey & Perrewé, 2014). Specifically, and in alignment with the transactional perspective, these results helped highlight how the job search represents an external event that triggers a cognitive appraisal of whether the event is a threat (i.e., feelings of

anxiety) that may cascade into a secondary appraisal of if the event is a challenge or hindrance. By intervening at the primary appraisal through encouraging the perception of the job search as opportunity versus a threat, my supplemental analysis highlight how it is possible to facilitate a positive appraisal process that results in a challenge appraisal and improved job search behavior (e.g., increased focused effort). Of course, the current intervention was not designed with this purpose in mind, suggesting that alternative interventions aimed explicitly at stress appraisals could be fruitful. Additionally, it would also be of value to explore how stable features of the job search, or the person, directly alter whether job search is perceived as a challenge or a hindrance.

Practical Implications

Practically, this intervention shows promise for helping job seekers facilitate a successful job search—particularly in the form of improving their affective well-being (i.e., excitement) that can then benefit their self-efficacy and types of job search effort. Prior interventions in the job search literature have predominantly focused on assisting unemployed job seekers, as these job seekers are considered to have the highest need for reemployment (Liu, Wang, et al., 2014). As such, interventions for job seekers have typically been time and labor intensive for both the job seekers and those responsible for administering the intervention, often occurring for several hours a day over the course of a week or even across multiple weeks (Liu, Wang, et al., 2014). A major limitation of this focus in the job search literature is that the time intensive nature of these designs necessarily precludes new labor market entrants and individuals who are already employed and are seeking a new position. However, these groups are also likely to feel anxiety surrounding their job search (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004) and therefore need assistance in managing their emotions to facilitate a more effective and efficient search. Although I recognize that my intervention did not directly impact anxiety, it *did* promote states of excitement, suggesting that it is possible to harness job seekers' emotions more adaptively.

Thus, paralleling techniques related to affective reappraisal in cognitive behavioral therapy for individuals with social anxiety (Goldin, 2014) my intervention represents a promising avenue for a self-guided job search intervention that is not time intensive (i.e., less than ten minutes per week), but still shows promising effectiveness for promoting beneficial job search behaviors (i.e., increasing focused and dream job search effort; reducing haphazard job search effort).

Further, although the within-person results for the effects of different types of job search effort on person-organization, demands-abilities, and needs-supplies fit were inconclusive due to the small sample size, correlations aggregated to the between-person level of analysis showed promising results (cf. Gabriel et al., 2021). Specifically, aggregated across weeks, focused job search effort exhibited a strong positive correlation with person-organization ($r = .59, p < .001$), demands-abilities ($r = .61, p < .001$), and needs-supplies fit ($r = .68, p < .001$) assessments. Although only part of my supplemental analyses, dream job search effort also exhibited large, positive correlation with person-organization fit ($r = .66, p < .001$), demands-abilities fit ($r = .69, p < .001$) and needs-supplies fit ($r = .71, p < .001$). These correlations were larger than the relationships with exploratory effort, which was positively related to demands-abilities fit ($r = .26, p = .013$) and needs-supplies fit ($r = .28, p = .007$), but unrelated to person-organization fit ($r = .10, p = .352$). Further, haphazard job search effort was negatively related to needs-supplies fit ($r = -.23, p = .030$), and unrelated to person-organization fit ($r = -.20, p = .062$) and demands-abilities fit ($r = -.17, p = .106$). Thus, although I did not find significant weekly effects, these correlations suggest that, over the course of one's job search, the intervention may be effective in helping job seekers land interviews with high fitting jobs. Of course, this needs to be tested in a more rigorous manner, but preliminary analyses from this intervention that show the relationship between the intervention, excitement, and its subsequent effects can be of benefit to job seekers.

Though I tout the importance of this intervention for being accessible for new labor market entrants and employed job seekers, there is also the possibility that this intervention would be beneficial for unemployed job seekers as well, especially when occurring in tandem with more involved job search trainings and interventions. As a comparison point, the JOBS intervention considers the emotional well-being of individuals important, as the deterioration in mental health of job seekers is likely to be detrimental to job search efforts (Price & Vinokur, 2014). Yet, in my assessment, the intervention as designed does little to specifically address this issue. For those groups which engage in job search trainings (e.g., unemployment centers), asking individuals to engage in emotion reappraisal (i.e., taking steps to promote their own excitement) throughout their job search, during both the training period and after the training is complete, could prove beneficial in increasing the effectiveness of these interventions and further reducing the time to reemployment. As such, this simple, yet effective, intervention presents a promising new avenue for research in the job search literature and in the field.

Limitations and Future Directions

In addition to the theoretical and practical contributions of this proposal detailed above there were also a number of limitations that need to be considered. First and foremost, issues with sample size, especially pertaining to the dependent variables, hampered the investigation of the focal model I proposed. For two of the measures of fit, there were only 257 observations; these measures included the self-reported number of interviews that job seekers had that aligned with the definitions of person-organization, demands-abilities, and needs-supplies fit, as well as the Cable and DeRue (2002) multi-item composite measures of fit. The sample sizes including these measures fell well below the recommended Level 1 sample size of 835 (Gabriel et al., 2019) and was not sufficient to detect relationships between exploratory, focused, and haphazard job search effort and post-interview fit. The third alternative measure of fit, wherein responses to

the self-reported number of interviews that aligned with the different definitions of fit had missing data coded as zero, provided some insights by showing that exploratory job search effort was positively related to person-organization fit and demands-abilities fit, but still—the majority of relationships were unsupported. This suggests that future research wanting to study more tangible outcomes of job search success—such as interviews or job offers—may need to take a longer timeframe (e.g., monthly) or lag outcomes into subsequent weeks (e.g., MacGowan et al., 2022). Unfortunately, due to the structure of my intervention, lagged variables from one week to the next was not possible due to the within- and between-person randomization I utilized.

The results of the manipulation check could also be considered a potential limitation. Specifically, while the intervention was effective in increasing post-intervention levels of excitement compared to pre-intervention levels of excitement, it was not effective in reducing anxiety. Therefore, while individuals may have benefitted from enhanced feelings of excitement due to the intervention, it seems as though their levels of anxiety were rather impervious. This is potentially not surprising, as past research has clearly shown that job seeking is anxiety-provoking (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2021), meaning that reducing anxiety may be quite the challenge. Nonetheless, adjustments to the intervention could help. One such adjustment could be to ask individuals to engage in a meditative, self-compassion exercise related to their job search anxiety (e.g., Kreemers et al., 2018), followed by the writing about why they are excited for their job search. The meditative self-compassion exercise may relieve anxiety while the reappraisal stimulates excitement, which could potentially create a more robust and effective intervention.

Another limitation may be the use of a sample of student job seekers, though this sample was chosen intentionally given the neglect of new labor market entrants in the job search intervention literature (Liu, Wang, et al., 2014). Indeed, although prior research has established

the presence of job search anxiety in new labor market entrants (e.g., Gabrie et al., 2021), it is possible that because new labor market entrants job search often coincides with other important life milestones (e.g., completion of courses, graduation) that may contribute to elevated levels of excitement (or anxiety) that diminish the effectiveness of the intervention for this group. Thus, to improve generalizability and ensure the robustness of these findings, it would be helpful to replicate the current study with different job seekers who may also benefit from this intervention.

Another potential limitation of this proposal is the use of self-report data. Self-report data was used because of the job seekers engagement with the intervention and because they are the best suited for reporting their emotions, self-efficacy, and job search effort (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2019). However, of value would be taking steps to pair other-reports of data with job seekers, such as recruiter assessments of perceived applicant preparedness or fit, as well as downstream outcomes such as job satisfaction, salary, and benefits once job seekers have accepted and begun their position. Of course, such data would be a challenge with a within-person design, suggesting again that a longer timeframe for a study would be needed to capture such data.

Further, the lack of moderating effects of both the proposed moderator—job search goal clarity—and the supplemental moderator—general defensive pessimism—represents a limitation, as I was unable to elucidate the differences between participants that would result in the intervention being more or less effective. When considering alternative moderators to test, there may be benefits in understanding the extent to which individuals feel emotions strongly (and thus have greater need for reappraisal; e.g., higher levels of trait emotional stability), as well understanding the extent to which individuals are committed to improving their emotional states related to the job search. Further, personality difference, such as conscientiousness or even psychological resilience, could impact the extent to which individuals engage with the

intervention and the job search process more generally, ultimately impacting its effectiveness.

Finally, future interventions could leverage the effectiveness of the short, but repeated, intervention presented in this proposal for other types of interventions. For instance, given the lack of direct effects on self-efficacy, it could be useful to do a self-efficacy specific writing exercise each week to directly enhance job seeker confidence. Similarly, an intervention encouraging participants to engage in focused job search effort or dream job search effort for 10 to 60 minutes each week could be beneficial for improving person-organization, demands-abilities, and needs-supplies fit. Beyond these possibilities, drawing from research related to the benefits of metacognitive strategies (Chawla et al., 2019) and problem-solving pondering (Gabriel et al., 2021) during the job search, it could be useful to job seekers to engage in these activities for a short period of time weekly to encourage more adaptive job seeking behaviors.

Conclusion

Taken together, the current research highlights the various potential benefits for job seekers when reappraising job search anxiety as job search excitement. Results—when modeling excitement directly—helped show that job seekers can exhibit adaptive job search behavior, including increased focused and dream job search effort and reduced haphazard job search effort. These benefits were conferred via a number of potential mediators, including creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, reappraisal, and challenge appraisals. As such, the current research speaks to how several theories, including social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), emotion regulation theory (Gross, 2002), and the transactional theory of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1985), can be woven into the job search literature to spur enhanced performance. Further, the practical implications of this intervention suggest that short, but repetitive, interventions may prove highly beneficial for shaping job seeker cognitions, opening up a new avenue of inquiry for job search scholarship.

Appendix A
Tables and Figures

Table 1
Variance Decomposition for Within-Person Variables

Construct	Within- Individual Variance (σ^2)	Between- Individual Variance (τ_{00})	% of Within- Individual Variance
Intervention vs. Control	.249	.002	99.20%
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy	.367	.320	53.42%
Networking Self-Efficacy	.275	.498	35.58%
Focused Job Search Effort	.305	.108	73.85%
Exploratory Job Search Effort	.551	.194	73.96%
Haphazard Job Search Effort	.377	.397	48.71%
Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit	2.001	.307	86.70%
Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit	1.905	.201	90.46%
Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit	1.605	.345	82.31%
General Job Search Self-Efficacy*	.303	.339	47.20%
Positive Affect*	.372	.599	38.31%
Negative Affect*	.336	.731	31.49%
Positive Affect**	.341	.626	35.26%
Negative Affect**	.243	.749	24.50%

Note. % of total variance that is within-person was computed using the formula $\sigma^2 / (\sigma^2 + \tau_{00})$. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, and networking self-efficacy are assessed at the beginning of the week (Sunday-Monday), along with control variables marked by an asterisk; all other variables are assessed later in the same week, including control variables marked by double asterisks (Friday-Saturday).

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Focal Study Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
Level 1 Variables																										
1. Intervention (vs. Control)	0.51	0.16																								
2. Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy	3.56	0.67	-.04																							
3. Networking Self-Efficacy	3.56	0.73	-.03	.48**																						
4. Focused Job Search Effort	3.59	0.44	-.01	.01	.12**																					
5. Exploratory Job Search Effort	3.21	0.55	-.06	.04	.01	.14**																				
6. Haphazard Job Search Effort	2.67	0.67	.00	-.11**	-.04	-.01	.13**																			
7. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit	1.38	0.91	-.10	-.02	-.07	-.11	.04	-.09																		
8. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit	1.43	0.84	-.07	-.03	-.09	-.10	.01	-.10	.83**																	
9. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit	1.36	0.96	-.07	-.05	-.09	-.11	-.04	-.10	.87**	.92**																
Level 1 Control Variables																										
10. Week of the Study	4.85	1.32	-.02	.04	-.07	-.10	-.11**	-.03	-.12	-.06	-.04															
11. General Job Search Self-Efficacy	3.52	0.68	-.04	.47**	.44**	.09*	.04	-.06	.04	-.03	-.02	-.08*														
12. Positive Affect (Beginning of the Week)	2.67	0.83	.10**	.25**	.28**	.07	-.03	-.11**	-.09	-.04	-.05	.01	.28**													
13. Negative Affect (Beginning of the Week)	2.13	0.90	-.06	.03	-.02	.04	.00	.04	.06	.00	.04	-.10**	-.05	.10**												
14. Positive Affect (End of the Week)	2.70	0.85	.00	.09*	.11**	.03	.04	-.07	-.03	-.06	-.05	.04	.11**	.24**	-.08*											
15. Negative Affect (End of the Week)	2.05	0.88	.05	-.01	-.01	-.03	-.04	.04	-.08	-.08	-.09	-.08*	-.03	-.12**	.26**	-.14**										
Level 2 Variable																										
16. Job Search Goal Clarity	2.86	0.95	.08	.15	.25**	.12	.21*	-.21*	.08	.16	.17	-.08	.19*	.07	-.12	.06	-.04									
Level 2 Control Variables																										
17. Starting Condition	0.51	0.50	.18	.11	.16	.18	.10	-.21*	.00	.05	.10	-.14	.14	.03	-.15	.04	-.09	.72**								
18. Gender	0.57	0.59	-.27**	-.06	.14	.21*	.05	-.06	.03	.07	.05	.09	-.06	-.16	.12	-.16	.10	-.10	-.14							
19. GPA	3.66	0.23	.05	.12	.05	.10	-.08	-.16	-.19	-.21*	-.18	.14	.12	.05	-.12	.03	-.10	-.05	.02	.06						
Level 2 Descriptive Variables																										
20. Age	21.16	0.57	-.12	.01	.02	.05	.07	-.01	.09	.05	.07	-.18	.06	.13	.03	.17	.02	.10	.11	.19	-.32**					
21. Race	0.26	0.44	-.03	-.22*	-.18	-.16	-.02	.13	-.04	.01	-.01	-.11	-.22*	-.06	.14	-.15	.19*	-.02	-.03	-.06	-.27**	.22*				
Supplemental Analyses Correlations																										
22. Post-Manipulation Anxiety	2.38	0.92	-.05	-.04	-.00	.09*	.01	.01	.05	.00	.02	-.30**	-.09*	-.13*	.43**	-.07	.33*	-.06	-.12	.17	-.19*	.09	.14			
23. Post-Manipulation Excitement	2.61	0.91	.09*	.18**	.27**	.09*	-.01	-.04	.02	.03	.01	-.07	.24**	.60**	-.02	.22**	-.06	.05	-.00	-.17	.04	.20*	-.05	.10**		
24. Emotion Regulation	3.42	0.52	-.03	.03	.05	.09*	.04	.03	-.06	-.08	-.08	.01	.07	.06	-.01	.14**	-.05	.13	.13	.12	.09	.03	-.14	-.04	.03	
25. Emotion Suppression	2.88	0.67	.02	-.03	.01	.01	-.04	.16**	.10	.01	.03	-.16**	-.03	-.02	.09*	-.04	.05	.00	.01	-.19	-.19	.12	.13	.08*	.01	
26. Challenge Stress Appraisal	3.81	0.67	-.01	.27**	.26**	.07	.08*	-.08*	-.03	-.04	-.02	-.07	.28*	.21**	-.02	.08*	-.03	.09	.11	.12	.04	.17	-.11	.01	.17**	
27. Hindrance Stress Appraisal	2.70	0.91	-.08*	.08*	.10**	.08*	.04	.10**	-.06	-.08	-.09	-.05	.05	.09*	.08*	.02	.01	-.07	-.17	-.01	-.17	.14	.09	.07	.05	
28. Dream Job Search Effort	3.64	0.56	.00	.06	.11**	.28**	.25**	.04	.11	-.01	-.03	.05	.14**	.07	-.06	.17**	-.16**	.20*	.21*	.03	.01	.14	-.10	-.05	-.00	
29. General Defensive Pessimism	4.71	0.97	-.13	-.23*	-.12	-.13	-.07	.10	-.04	-.01	-.06	.12	-.20*	-.26**	.33**	-.24*	.29**	-.23*	-.25*	.32**	-.08	.09	.02	.38**	-.21*	

Note. Level 1 $n = 257-745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. Correlations for within-individual (Level 1) variables reflect within person centered relationships. Level 1 variables were aggregated to estimate between-individual (Level 2) correlations. Intervention is coded as 1, with weeks in the control group coded as 0. Gender is coded such that 0 = male and 1 = female; race is coded such that 0 = non-white and 1 = white. Age and race are not modeled in the focal analyses but are included here for completeness. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and Level 1 control variables positive and negative affect are assessed at the beginning of the week (Sunday-Monday); all other variables are assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday). * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 2 (Continued)**Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Focal Study Variables**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>
Level 1 Variables						
1. Intervention (vs. Control)						
2. Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy						
3. Networking Self-Efficacy						
4. Focused Job Search Effort						
5. Exploratory Job Search Effort						
6. Haphazard Job Search Effort						
7. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit						
8. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit						
9. Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit						
Level 1 Control Variables						
10. Week of the Study						
11. General Job Search Self-Efficacy						
12. Positive Affect (Beginning of the Week)						
13. Negative Affect (Beginning of the Week)						
14. Positive Affect (End of the Week)						
15. Negative Affect (End of the Week)						
Level 2 Variable						
16. Job Search Goal Clarity						
Level 2 Control Variables						
17. Starting Condition						
18. Gender						
19. GPA						
Level 2 Descriptive Variables						
20. Age						
21. Race						
Supplemental Analyses Correlations						
22. Post-Manipulation Anxiety						
23. Post-Manipulation Excitement						
24. Emotion Regulation						
25. Emotion Suppression	.17*					
26. Challenge Stress Appraisal	.16**	-.04				
27. Hindrance Stress Appraisal	.06	.05	.11**			
28. Dream Job Search Effort	.26**	.01	.14**	.11*		
29. General Defensive Pessimism	-.13	.19	-.12	.27**	-.21*	

Note. Level 1 $n = 257-745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. Correlations for within-individual (Level 1) variables reflect within person centered relationships. Level 1 variables were aggregated to estimate between-individual (Level 2) correlations. Intervention is coded as 1, with weeks in the control group coded as 0. Gender is coded such that 0 = male and 1 = female; race is coded such that 0 = non-white and 1 = white. Age and race are not modeled in the focal analyses but are included here for completeness. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and Level 1 control variables positive and negative affect are assessed at the beginning of the week (Sunday-Monday); all other variables are assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday). * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 3

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.57**	(.10)	3.64**	(.10)	3.07**	(.36)	3.57**	(.36)	3.23 **	(.28)	1.94	(1.23)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.07	(.11)	.32*	(.13)								
Starting Condition	.14	(.19)	.36	(.24)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.18	(.20)
GPA											-.92	(.51)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.01	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	-.06*	(.03)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.02	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	.26	(.21)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.08	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	-.15	(.20)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	.06	(.10)	.05	(.07)	-.28	(.22)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.05	(.09)	-.00	(.07)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	-.30	(.17)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.07)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	-.04	(.20)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	-.18	(.28)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.06	(.30)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.14	(.14)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.17	(.16)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.01	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.56**	(.10)	3.63**	(.10)	3.07**	(.36)	3.57**	(.36)	3.23 **	(.28)	1.78 **	(.25)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.06	(.12)	.31*	(.13)								
Starting Condition	.14	(.19)	.36	(.25)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.04	(.19)
GPA											-.78	(.60)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.02	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	-.04	(.03)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.02	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	.03	(.19)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.08	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	-.23	(.22)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	.06	(.10)	.05	(.07)	-.31	(.23)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.05	(.09)	.00	(.07)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	-.18	(.19)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.07)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	.01	(.20)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	-.23	(.24)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.08	(.14)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											-.11	(.14)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											.14	(.14)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.01	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.56**	(.10)	3.63**	(.10)	3.07**	(.36)	3.57**	(.36)	3.23 **	(.28)	1.70	(2.98)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.06	(.12)	.31*	(.13)								
Starting Condition	.15	(.19)	.37	(.25)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.04	(.18)
GPA											-.64	(1.17)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.01	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	-.03	(.05)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.02	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	.06	(.17)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.08	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	-.19	(.19)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	-.15	(.09)	.05	(.07)	-.29	(.21)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.02	(.05)	.00	(.12)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	-.17	(.18)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.07)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	.05	(.22)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	-.19	(.28)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.07	(.56)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.09	(.16)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.08	(.22)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.01	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002)

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.56**	(.10)	3.63**	(.10)	3.06**	(.36)	3.58**	(.36)	3.23 **	(.28)	3.39 **	(.37)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.07	(.11)	.31*	(.13)								
Starting Condition	.16	(.20)	.38	(.24)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											.07	(.11)
GPA											.06	(.26)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.02	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	.01	(.01)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.01	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	-.19	(.10)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.07	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	.19 *	(.08)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	-.15	(.09)	.05	(.07)	-.01	(.10)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.05	(.09)	.00	(.07)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	-.01	(.07)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.07)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	-.11	(.08)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	-.08	(.07)
Focused Job Search Effort											.16	(.08)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.01	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.07	(.07)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.00	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 7

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002)

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.55**	(.10)	3.63**	(.10)	3.05**	(.35)	3.58**	(.36)	3.24 **	(.29)	3.22 **	(.33)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.07	(.11)	.31*	(.13)								
Starting Condition	.17	(.18)	.39	(.24)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											.16	(.11)
GPA											-.11	(.25)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.01	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	.01	(.01)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.01	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	-.11	(.08)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.08	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	.18 **	(.06)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	-.15	(.09)	.05	(.07)	-.02	(.09)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.02	(.05)	.00	(.12)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	.01	(.07)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.08)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	-.11	(.08)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	-.08	(.07)
Focused Job Search Effort											.11	(.06)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.05	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.04	(.08)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.01	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 8

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002)

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.55**	(.10)	3.63**	(.10)	3.07**	(.36)	3.57**	(.36)	3.23 **	(.28)	3.47	(.48)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	-.01	(.10)	.26	(.14)								
Starting Condition	.08	(.18)	.33	(.25)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											.21	(.12)
GPA											-.20	(.21)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.01	(.02)	-.01	(.02)	-.00	(.02)	-.05**	(.02)	-.03	(.02)	.01	(.01)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.38**	(.09)	.27**	(.07)	.01	(.09)	-.14	(.10)	-.10	(.10)	-.08	(.08)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.08	(.06)	.16**	(.06)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	-.02	(.07)	-.09	(.07)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.11	(.07)	.09	(.08)	-.12	(.08)	.18 **	(.07)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					.06	(.10)	-.15	(.09)	.05	(.07)	.08	(.06)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.05	(.09)	-.00	(.07)	.10	(.07)	-.14	(.11)	-.05	(.08)	.05	(.06)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.08	(.08)	.05	(.10)	-.15	(.08)	-.13 *	(.07)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.10	(.15)	-.06	(.09)	.02	(.08)	.00	(.06)
Focused Job Search Effort											.08	(.10)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.09	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.11	(.10)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	-.01	(.11)	.05	(.08)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 257$; Level 2 $n = 90$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 9

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit with Missing Fit Data Coded as 0

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Person-Organization Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.47**	(.07)	3.57**	(.08)	3.03**	(.17)	2.84**	(.26)	3.01 **	(.24)	0.92	(.48)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.10	(.09)	.23	(.12)								
Starting Condition	-.01	(.15)	.07	(.22)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.16	(.14)
GPA											-.42	(.23)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.02	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.02*	(.01)	-.03*	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.08 **	(.02)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.44**	(.06)	.36**	(.05)	.02	(.06)	-.04	(.06)	-.02	(.05)	.00	(.13)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.13**	(.04)	.15**	(.03)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	.07	(.04)	.00	(.03)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.01	(.05)	.04	(.05)	-.05	(.05)	.04	(.09)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					-.03	(.05)	-.05	(.05)	.03	(.04)	.01	(.07)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	-.04	(.04)	-.04	(.04)	.01	(.04)	-.07	(.06)	-.00	(.04)	-.06	(.07)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.04	(.06)	.09	(.05)	-.12 *	(.06)	-.02	(.09)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.14**	(.05)	.05	(.05)	.04	(.07)	-.00	(.13)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.01	(.12)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.13 *	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.15	(.08)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	.05	(.05)	.04	(.05)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 10

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit with Missing Fit Data Coded as 0

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Demands-Abilities Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.47**	(.07)	3.57**	(.08)	3.03**	(.17)	2.84**	(.26)	3.01 **	(.24)	0.80	(.48)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.10	(.09)	.22	(.12)								
Starting Condition	-.01	(.15)	.07	(.22)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.09	(.12)
GPA											-.38	(.22)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.02	(.01)	-.00	(.01)	-.02*	(.01)	-.03*	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.07 **	(.02)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.44**	(.06)	.36**	(.05)	.02	(.06)	-.04	(.06)	-.02	(.05)	-.03	(.08)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.13**	(.04)	.15**	(.03)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	.07	(.04)	.00	(.03)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.01	(.05)	.04	(.05)	-.05	(.05)	.02	(.09)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					-.03	(.05)	-.06	(.05)	.03	(.04)	.05	(.06)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	-.04	(.04)	-.04	(.04)	.01	(.04)	-.07	(.06)	-.00	(.04)	-.03	(.08)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.04	(.06)	.09	(.05)	-.12 *	(.06)	-.02	(.09)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.14**	(.05)	.05	(.05)	.04	(.07)	-.07	(.13)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.01	(.11)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.14 *	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.12	(.08)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	.05	(.05)	.04	(.05)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 11

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit with Missing Fit Data Coded as 0

Predictor	Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Post-Interview Perceived Fit: Needs-Supplies Fit	
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	3.47**	(.07)	3.57**	(.08)	3.03**	(.17)	2.84**	(.26)	3.01 **	(.24)	0.78	(.50)
Level 2 Predictors												
Job Search Goal Clarity	.10	(.09)	.23*	(.05)								
Starting Condition	.00	(.15)	.08	(.22)								
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)											-.10	(.12)
GPA											-.34	(.21)
Level 1 Predictors												
Week of the Study	.02	(.01)	-.00	(.01)	-.02*	(.01)	-.03*	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.06 **	(.02)
General Job Search Self-Efficacy	.44**	(.06)	.36**	(.05)	.02	(.06)	-.04	(.06)	-.02	(.05)	-.04	(.07)
Positive Affect (Start of Week)	.13**	(.04)	.15**	(.03)								
Negative Affect (Start of Week)	.07	(.04)	.00	(.03)								
Positive Affect (End of Week)					.01	(.05)	.04	(.05)	-.05	(.05)	.03	(.08)
Negative Affect (End of Week)					-.03	(.05)	-.06	(.05)	.03	(.04)	.03	(.06)
Study Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	-.04	(.04)	-.04	(.04)	.01	(.04)	-.07	(.06)	-.00	(.04)	-.01	(.08)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy					.04	(.06)	.09	(.05)	-.12 *	(.06)	-.02	(.08)
Networking Self-Efficacy					.14**	(.05)	.05	(.05)	.04	(.07)	-.05	(.13)
Focused Job Search Effort											-.01	(.11)
Exploratory Job Search Effort											.12	(.06)
Haphazard Job Search Effort											-.11	(.08)
Cross-Level Moderation												
Job Search Goal Clarity x Study Condition	.05	(.05)	.04	(.05)								

Note. Level 1 $n = 745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, and haphazard job search effort as well as fit and positive and negative affect control variables were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 12

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Types of Effort with Anxiety and Excitement Modeled

Predictor	Post Intervention Excitement		Post Intervention Anxiety		Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy		Networking Self-Efficacy		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Dream Job Search Effort	
	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE
Intercept	2.61	** (.09)	2.49**	(.10)	3.14**	(.15)	3.11**	(.20)	3.21**	(.19)	3.02	** (.26)	3.01	** (.26)	3.08	** (.18)
Level 2 Predictors																
Job Search Goal Clarity	.03	(.12)	.07	(.12)												
Starting Condition	.28	(.22)	.12	(.19)												
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)									.22*	(.09)	.09	(.10)	-.13	(.12)	.17	(.09)
GPA									.08	(.14)	-.21	(.29)	-.17	(.28)	-.22	(.19)
Level 1 Predictors																
Week of the Study	.00	(.01)	-.02**	(.01)	.01	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.03	* (.01)	-.01	(.01)	.01	(.01)
Pre-Intervention Excitement	.73	** (.03)			-.04	(.05)	-.06	(.04)								
Pre-Intervention Anxiety			.63**	(.05)	.05	(.05)	.07	(.04)								
Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.11	* (.04)	-.04	(.04)	-.08	(.05)	-.07	(.09)	-.00	(.04)	-.07	(.06)	-.03	(.05)	-.02	(.03)
Post-Intervention Excitement					.25**	(.04)	.29**	(.05)	.04	(.03)	-.03	(.04)	-.00	(.04)	-.02	(.04)
Post-Intervention Anxiety					-.12*	(.05)	-.11*	(.04)	.06	(.04)	-.02	(.04)	-.00	(.04)	.01	(.04)
Creative Job Search Self-Efficacy									.01	(.06)	.07	(.05)	-.11	* (.05)	.05	(.04)
Networking Self-Efficacy									.11*	(.05)	.03	(.06)	.02	(.08)	.10	** (.04)
Cross-Level Moderation																
Job Search Goal Clarity x Condition	-.05	(.04)	-.04	(.05)												
General Defensive Pessimism x Condition	.01	(.05)	.00	(.04)												

Note. Level 1 $n = 745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. SE = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), post intervention excitement and anxiety, creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy, and pre-intervention excitement and anxiety control variables were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, haphazard, and dream job search effort were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Table 13

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Types of Effort with Emotion Reappraisal and Emotion Suppression

Predictor	Post Intervention Excitement		Post Intervention Anxiety		Emotion Reappraisal		Emotion Suppression		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Dream Job Search Effort		
	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	γ	<i>SE</i>	
Intercept	2.61	** (.09)	2.49**	(.10)	3.36**	(.12)	2.84**	(.17)	3.24**	(.21)	3.09	** (.27)	2.16	** (.24)	2.90	** (.21)	
Level 2 Predictors																	
Job Search Goal Clarity	-.02	(.13)	.07	(.14)													
Starting Condition	.24	(.22)	.11	(.21)													
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)									.24**	(.08)	.09	(.10)	-.11	(.11)	.15	(.08)	
GPA									.06	(.13)	-.21	(.30)	-.14	(.30)	-.23	(.18)	
Level 1 Predictors																	
Week of the Study	.00	(.01)	-.02**	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.03**	(.01)	-.01	(.01)	-.03	*	(.01)	-.00	(.01)	.01	(.01)
Pre-Intervention Excitement	.73	** (.03)			-.06	(.04)	.03	(.05)									
Pre-Intervention Anxiety			.63**	(.05)	.09	(.05)	-.08	(.04)									
Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.11	*	(.04)	-.04	(.04)	-.04	(.05)	.03	(.06)	-.01	(.04)	-.07	(.06)	.00	(.04)	.01	(.04)
Post-Intervention Excitement					.11**	(.04)	-.04	(.04)	.06*	(.03)	-.01	(.04)	-.04	(.05)	-.00	(.03)	
Post-Intervention Anxiety					-.09*	(.04)	.13**	(.05)	.06	(.04)	-.02	(.04)	-.01	(.04)	-.01	(.04)	
Emotion Reappraisal									.12.**	(.04)	.10	(.06)	-.02	(.06)	.23	** (.04)	
Emotion Suppression									.01	(.04)	-.03	(.06)	.20	** (.06)	-.03	** (.03)	
Cross-Level Moderation																	
Job Search Goal Clarity x Condition	-.05	(.04)	-.04	(.05)													

Note. Level 1 $n = 745$; Level 2 $n = 106$. *SE* = standard error. The intervention (vs. control) and emotion reappraisal and suppression variables are assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, haphazard, and dream job search effort are assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

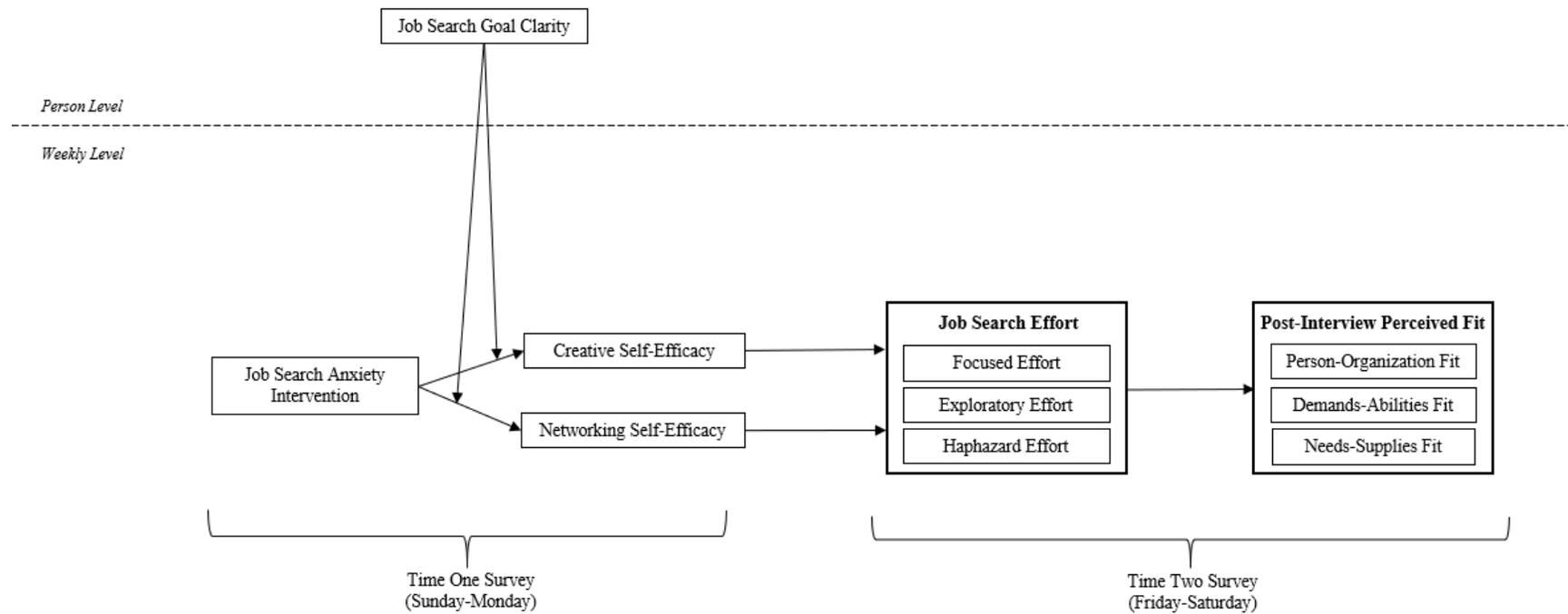
Table 14

Predictor	Post Intervention Excitement		Post Intervention Anxiety		Challenge Stressor		Hindrance Stressor		Focused Search Effort		Exploratory Search Effort		Haphazard Search Effort		Dream Job Search Effort						
	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE					
Intercept	2.61	**	(.09)	2.49**	(.10)	3.74**	(.18)	2.29**	(.19)	2.99**	(.22)	2.87	**	(.23)	2.72	**	(.26)	2.66	**	(.20)	
Level 2 Predictors																					
Job Search Goal Clarity	-.02		(.11)	.09		(.13)															
Starting Condition	.28		(.21)	.14		(.21)															
Gender (1 = female; 0 = male)										.23**	(.08)	.11		(.10)	-.15		(.11)	.15		(.08)	
GPA										.11	(.12)	-.17		(.26)	-.13		(.26)	-.15		(.16)	
Level 1 Predictors																					
Week of the Study	.00		(.01)	-.02**		(.01)	-.01		(.01)	-.00		(.01)	-.01		(.01)	-.03	*	(.01)	-.01		(.01)
Pre-Intervention Excitement	.73	**	(.03)				.01		(.04)	.01		(.06)									
Pre-Intervention Anxiety				.63**		(.05)	.10**		(.04)	.05		(.04)									
Condition: Intervention (1) vs. Control (0)	.11	*	(.04)	-.04		(.04)	-.02		(.04)	-.13*		(.06)	-.01		(.04)	-.07		(.06)	.01		(.05)
Post-Intervention Excitement							.14**		(.04)	.06		(.05)	.05		(.03)	-.02		(.04)	-.03		(.05)
Post-Intervention Anxiety							-.10*		(.05)	.10		(.06)	.05		(.04)	-.04		(.04)	-.01		(.04)
Challenge Stressor										.15**		(.06)	.08		(.05)	-.10		(.06)	-.10		(.06)
Hindrance Stressor										.04		(.03)	.06		(.04)	.13	**	(.04)	.05	*	(.02)
Cross-Level Moderation																					
Job Search Goal Clarity x Condition	-.05		(.04)	-.04		(.05)															

Simultaneous Multilevel Path Analysis Results Predicting Types of Effort with Challenge and Hindrance Stress

Note. Level 1 $n = 743$; Level 2 $n = 106$. SE = standard error. The intervention (vs. control), and challenge and hindrance stressors were assessed at the start of the week (Sunday-Monday); focused, exploratory, haphazard, and dream job search effort were assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

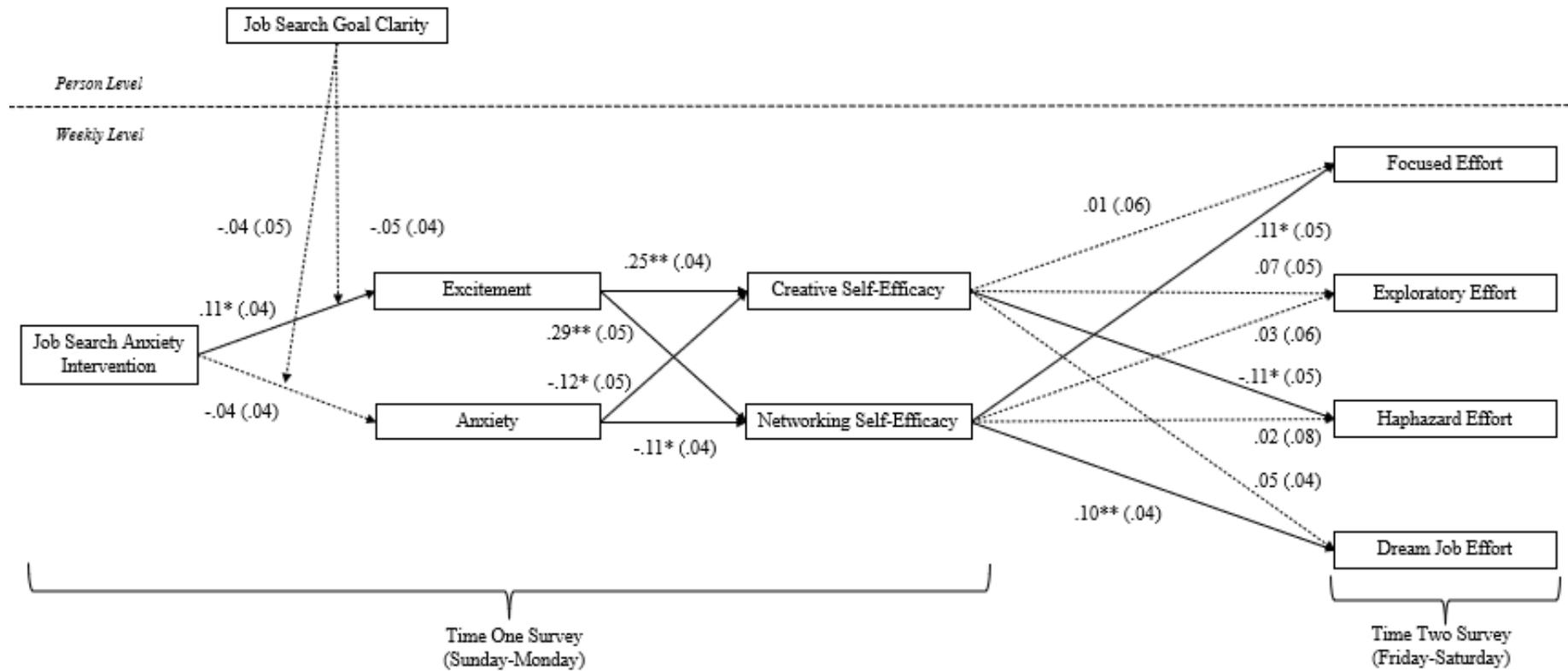
Figure 1
Conceptual Model



Note. The intervention (vs. control), creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy were assessed at the beginning of the week (Sunday-Monday); all other variables are assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday).

Figure 2

Alternative Model with Excitement and Anxiety Modeled



Note. The intervention (vs. control), excitement and anxiety, as well as creative job search self-efficacy, networking self-efficacy were assessed at the beginning of the week (Sunday-Monday); all other variables are assessed later in the same week (Friday-Saturday). General Defensive Pessimism was also tested as a moderator of this model, but results were non-significant.

Appendix B Survey Materials

Welcome Screen

Thank you for your interest in the Weekly Job Search Experiences Study, conducted by Rebecca MacGowan, Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Arizona, and Allison Gabriel, Professor of Management and Organizations at the University of Arizona.

The main aim of this project is to better understand aspects that characterize the job/internship search process, and how applicants respond to the various events that occur during a job/internship search. **Only undergraduate students who are actively seeking for a full-time job OR internship are eligible.** You will be asked to respond to an opt-in survey online that will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Following this, you will be asked to complete a short 5-10 minute online survey twice a week, distributed every Sunday and Friday morning for the next ten (10) weeks; you will have until Monday at 11:59pm each week to complete the first survey, and until Saturday at 11:59pm each week to complete the second survey. The surveys will be e-mailed to you, as will reminders on Monday and Saturday mornings.

You can earn 1.0 course credit for *every full week of surveys* that you complete and **these points will be doubled** for completing *all* ten weeks of surveys (i.e., the opt-in survey and each of the two weekly surveys). Thus, **in total, you can earn 22.0 course credit points for complete participation in this study.** As a note, all *extra course credit will be posted at the end of the study*—that is, once we calculate the number of surveys you complete. Please also note that missed surveys cannot be made up. Additionally, if you complete all surveys you will be entered into a raffle to win one of five \$100 Amazon gift cards.

To learn more information and to participate in the study, please click the " >>" button below, read the consent page, and agree to participate. You will then be taken to the study. If you would like to receive a summary of the study findings, or if you have any questions, please contact Rebecca MacGowan using the information provided below.

We would like to thank you very much in advance for your help with this important research.

Sincerely,
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Level 2 (Between-Person) Survey

Screening Questions

1. How old are you in years? Please write the numeric value only. (If less than 18, removed from study)
2. Are you currently searching for a full-time job or internship (If no, placed in alternative study)

Student ID Number and Email Address

Please enter the email address you would like your weekly surveys distributed to. **We will email the survey link each week.** For tracking purposes, we recommend using your University of Arizona e-email account. However, this should be an e-mail address that you check frequently.

Email:

Please enter your student identification number. The student identification number will allow us to track your participation across the opt-in survey and each of the weekly surveys while also enabling us to match your response across the surveys. As a note, you will only be required to enter your student identification number once.

Student identification number:

Demographics

- Age
- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Major
 - Accounting
 - Business Administration
 - Business Economics
 - Business Management
 - Economics
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Finance
 - Management Information Systems
 - Marketing
 - Operations Management
- Current GPA
- Anticipated industry you will accept a job in:
- Are you a first-generation college student? Y/N

Job Search Descriptives

What type of position are you currently searching for?

- Job

- Internship
- Job or internship

Are you searching for full-time or part-time employment?

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Full-time or part-time

Are you expecting to receive a salaried or hourly job?

- Salaried
- Hourly
- Salaried or hourly

How far along are you in your job/internship process?

- Early (i.e., you have recently started to approach the job/internship search process)
- Middle (i.e., you have been searching for a job/internship for some time and will continue to do so)
- Late (i.e., you are getting very close to finding a full-time job/internship)

Have you recently held an internship? Yes/No

- If YES: Do you expect to receive a full-time offer from that internship?

How long have you been actively job/internship seeking **prior to completing this survey**?

_____ weeks _____ days

Job-Search Clarity (adapted from Wanberg, Hough, and Song, 2002; $\alpha = .86$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* about your job/internship search (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

1. I have a clear idea of the type of job/internship that I want to find.
2. I need help deciding what career I want.
3. I need help deciding what type of work I would really enjoy.
4. I need help planning a career.

Level 1 (Within-Person) Interventions and Measures
Sunday – Monday Survey

Intervention Manipulation

Anxiety/Excitement Manipulation (adapted from Ford et al., 2019)

“This week, we are going to ask you to write a statement (2 paragraphs) regarding why you are **excited** about your job and/or internship search this week. Research shows that experiencing distress (e.g., worry, anxiety) can contribute to worse mental well-being, physical health, and performance. Because of this, it is important to manage these emotions as they relate to the job search. One way is to reconsider or reframe situations in a new way so that the situations are less upsetting and **more exciting**. We know that it can be a challenge to change one’s perspective about a situation like this, but we would like you to try. As an example, individuals who feel anxious about public speaking may contemplate something such as the following: “This is experience is exciting because it is an opportunity to grow and become the person I want to be.” There are no right or wrong answers. Simply write why you are excited for your job and/or internship search for the upcoming week.”

Control Condition (adapted from Ford et al., 2019)

“This week, we are going to ask you to write a statement (2 paragraphs) regarding your thoughts and feelings about your job and/or internship search this week. This can be about anything you are thinking or feeling regarding your upcoming job/internship search this week. You do not need to write about anything in particular. Instead, simply free write your thoughts and feelings about the job search using a “stream of conscious” approach, writing what comes to mind and not censoring your thoughts or feelings in regard to your job and/or internship search this upcoming week. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply write what you are thinking or feeling regarding your job and/or internship search for the upcoming week.”

Anxiety and Excitement (based on Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011; Brooks, 2014; Pre-anxiety $\alpha = .92$; Post-anxiety $\alpha = .82$; Pre-excitement $\alpha = .91$; Post-excitement $\alpha = .94$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experiencing each of the following *in thinking about your upcoming week of job/internship seeking*:

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

1. Anxious
2. Apprehensive
3. Worried
4. Nervous
5. Excited
6. Enthusiastic
7. Energetic
8. Ecstatic

PA/NA (Russell, 2003; Positive Affect $\alpha = .90$; Negative Affect $\alpha = .85$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experiencing each of the following *in thinking about your upcoming week of job/internship seeking*:

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

9. Cheerful
10. Happy
11. Excited
12. Contented
13. Serene
14. Calm
15. Upset
16. Distressed
17. Tense
18. Sad
19. Tired
20. Gloomy

Creative Self-Efficacy (adapted from Tierney & Farmer, 2002; $\alpha = .85$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate *your confidence in your ability to be creative in your job and/or internship search over this upcoming week.*

(1 = not at all confident; 5 = highly confident)

21. I have confidence in my ability to solve problems creatively in my job search.
22. I feel that I am good at generating novel ideas in my job search.
23. I can meet most of the creative challenges in my job search.

Networking Self-efficacy (adapted from Wanberg et al., 2020; $\alpha = .84$)

Using the response scale below, indicate your *confidence in your ability engage in several different networking activities during your upcoming week of job/internship seeking.*

(1 = not at all confident; 5 = highly confident)

24. Using networking in my job search
25. Informing everyone I know well that I am looking for work
26. Preparing an 'elevator pitch' outlining the type of job I am looking for and what I have to offer
27. Using networking to expand my target list of companies
28. Using LinkedIn [or another social network such as Handshake] as a tool to assist me in networking.

Job Search Self-Efficacy (adapted from Wilk & Moynihan, 2005; $\alpha = .83$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate *your confidence in your abilities in your job and/or internship search over this upcoming week.*

(1 = not at all confident; 5 = highly confident)

29. I am certain that I can perform to my standards on this job search
30. I am confident that I am able to successfully perform my current job search
31. I feel I have the skills and knowledge necessary to complete my job search effectively

**Level 1 (Within-Person) Measures
Friday-Saturday Survey**

Anxiety and Excitement (based on Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011; Brooks, 2014; Anxiety $\alpha = .87$; Excitement $\alpha = .92$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experienced each of the following *over your past week of job/internship seeking*:

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

1. Anxious
2. Apprehensive
3. Worried
4. Nervous
5. Excited
6. Enthusiastic
7. Energetic
8. Ecstatic

PA/NA (Russell, 2003; Positive Affect $\alpha = .88$; Negative Affect $\alpha = .85$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experienced each of the following *over your past week of job/internship seeking*:

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

9. Cheerful
10. Happy
11. Excited
12. Contented
13. Serene
14. Calm
15. Upset
16. Distressed
17. Tense
18. Sad
19. Tired
20. Gloomy

Job Search Strategies (adapted from Crossley & Highhouse, 2005; Focused Effort $\alpha = .84$; Exploratory Effort $\alpha = .85$; Haphazard Effort $\alpha = .78$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item in regards to *your job and/or internship search behaviors and activities* (e.g., sending résumés, information gathering, interviewing, etc.) *over the past week*.

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Over the past week of job/internship seeking...

Focused Strategies

21. ...I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that looked like what I wanted.

22. ...I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that I was really interested in.
23. ...I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that I knew I would qualify for.
24. ...I focused on/directed effort towards only jobs/internships that aligned with my employment goals.

Exploratory Strategies

25. ...I focused on/directed effort towards all job/internship opportunities I came across.
26. ...I focused on/directed effort towards all job/internship leads, even long shots.
27. ...I focused on/directed effort towards as many jobs/internships as possible.
28. ...I focused on/direct effort towards any job/internship regardless of my qualification.

Haphazard Strategies

29. ...I focused on/directed effort haphazardly toward job/internship openings, even those that didn't align with my employment goals.
30. ...I focused on/directed effort toward jobs/internships at random, without much consideration for whether I was qualified for them.
31. ...I used a hit-or-miss approach when focusing on/directing effort toward job/internship openings.
32. ...I did not have a plan when I focused on/directed effort toward job/internship openings.

Post-Interview Perceived Fit

33. **Post-Interview Perceived Fit—Person-Organization Fit:** You indicated that you received [X] interview(s) over the last week of job/internship seeking. In considering the interview(s), how many were with organizations where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between your values and the organization's values? In none, please type 0.
34. **Post-Interview Perceived Fit—Demands-Abilities Fit:** You indicated that you received [X] interviews over the last week of job/internship seeking. Of these interviews, how many were for jobs where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between your abilities and the demands of the job? In none, please type 0.
35. **Post-Interview Perceived Fit—Needs-Supplies Fit:** You indicated that you received [X] interviews over the last week of job/internship seeking. Of these interviews, how many were for jobs where you perceived a *high degree of alignment* between the things the job provides and what you are looking for in a job? In none, please type 0.

Interview Fit Perceptions (adapted from Cable & DeRue, 2002; Person-Organization Fit $\alpha = .86$; Demands-Abilities Fit $\alpha = .80$; Needs-Supplies Fit $\alpha = .81$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item in regards to *your job and/or internship search interviews over the past week*.

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Person-Organization Fit

36. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that the organization(s) I interviewed with values.
37. My personal values match the organization(s) that I interviewed with values and culture.

38. The organization(s) I interviewed with values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.

Needs-Supplies Fit

39. There is a good fit between what the organization(s) I interviewed with offers me and what I am looking for in a job.
40. The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by the organization(s) I interviewed with.
41. The job(s) that I interviewed with would give me just about everything that I want from a job.

Demands-Abilities Fit

42. The match is very good between the demands of the job(s) I interviewed for and my personal skills.
43. My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of the job(s) I interviewed for.
44. My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that the job(s) I interviewed for would place on me.

Job Search Behaviors and Outcomes (adapted from Barber et al., 1994; also see Wanberg et al., 2010)

45. In the past week, approximately how many hours did you devote to your job/internship search? Round to the nearest hour (e.g., two and a half hours = 3 hours). _____ hours
46. In the past week, approximately how many résumés did you send out to potential employers for your job/internship search? If none, please type 0. _____ résumés
47. How many phone/virtual (e.g., Zoom, Skype) interviews did you have this week? If none, please type 0. _____ interviews
48. How many in-person interviews did you have this week? If none, please type 0. _____ interviews
49. How many job/internship offers did you receive this week? If none, please type 0. _____ offers
- a. If greater than 1: What was the salary you were offered? \$_____
50. How many job/internship rejections did you receive this week? If none, please type 0. _____ rejections
51. In the past week, have you accepted a job offer? (yes/no)
- b. If YES: Are you still continuing to search for a job? Yes (Explain Why)/No

Level 2 Supplemental Measures

General Anxiety and Excitement (based on Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011; Brooks, 2014; Anxiety $\alpha = .91$; Excitement $\alpha = .94$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you experience each of the following *in general when thinking about your job/internship seeking* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

1. Anxious
2. Apprehensive
3. Worried
4. Nervous
5. Excited
6. Enthusiastic
7. Energetic
8. Ecstatic

Range and Differentiation of Emotional Experiences (Kang & Shaver, 2004; Range $\alpha = .87$; Differentiation $\alpha = .79$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Range

9. I experience a wide range of emotions.
10. I usually experience a limited range of emotions. (R)
11. I don't experience many different feelings in everyday life. (R)
12. I don't experience a variety of feelings on an everyday basis. (R)
13. I tend to experience a broad range of different feelings.
14. I have experienced a wide range of emotions throughout my life.

Differentiation

15. Feeling good or bad — those terms are sufficient to describe most of my feelings in everyday life. (R)
16. I am aware of the subtle differences between feelings I have.
17. I am good at distinguishing subtle differences in the meaning of closely related emotion words.
18. I am aware that each emotion has a completely different meaning.
19. If emotions are viewed as colors, I can notice even small variations within one kind of color (emotion).
20. Each emotion has a very distinct and unique meaning to me.
21. I am aware of the different nuances or subtleties of a given emotion.
22. I tend to draw fine distinctions between similar feelings (e.g., depressed and blue; annoyed and irritated).

Class Capital (adapted from Mittal et al., 2015; Economic Capital $\alpha = .77$; Social Capital $\alpha = .67$; Cultural Capital $\alpha = .69$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Economic capital

- 23. My parents pay for a lot of my expenses
- 24. I do not have to worry about paying my bills
- 25. My family helps pay for my tuition

Social capital

- 26. I know people that can provide useful information about careers and industries
- 27. I know people that can help me identify how and where to apply for jobs
- 28. My contacts have very high-status jobs

Cultural capital

Indicate how often you engage in each activity in general:

(1 = *never*; 5 = *very often*):

- 29. Eat at new or different restaurants
- 30. Go to museums, art galleries, operas, plays, or other similar activities
- 31. Travel for vacation

Job Seeker Social Network Characteristics (Van Hoya et al., 2009; Network Size $\alpha = .58$; Tie Strength $\alpha = .81$; Tie Status $\alpha = .90$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Network size

- 32. I know a lot of people who might help me find a job.
- 33. I can count on many relatives, friends, or acquaintances for information about jobs.
- 34. I know few people who might help me search for employment (reverse coded).
- 35. I have connections I can talk to in order to help me find a job.

Tie strength

Most people who might help me find a job...

- 36. ...are people I know very well, such as family or friends.
- 37. ...are people I often talk to.
- 38. ...are people I feel comfortable talking to, even about touchy subjects.

Tie status

Most people who might help me find a job...

- 39. ...have received a good education.
- 40. ...have a good job themselves.
- 41. ...are generally doing well in life.

Job Search Locus of Control (Adapted from Spector, 1988; Internal Locus of Control $\alpha = .81$; External Locus of Control $\alpha = .82$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Internal Locus of Control

42. A job search is what you make of it.
43. On most job searches, people can pretty much accomplish whatever they set out to accomplish.
44. If you know what you want out of a job, you can find a job that gives it to you.
45. Getting the job you want is mostly a matter of luck.
46. Making money is primarily a matter of good fortune.
47. Most people are capable of doing their job search well if they make the effort.

External Locus of Control

48. In order to get a really good job you need to have family members or friends in high places.
49. Job searches are usually a matter of good fortune.
50. When it comes to landing a really good job, who you know is more important than what you know.
51. To find a good job you have to know the right people.
52. It takes a lot of luck to find an outstanding job.
53. People who perform their job search well generally get rewarded for it.
54. The main difference between people who make a lot of money and people who make a little money is luck.

Perceived Job Alternatives (Bretz et al., 1994)

55. Using the response scale below, give your best estimate of your present employment opportunities *in general*.

(1 = *no employment opportunities*; 5 = *many employment opportunities*)

Job Search Commitment (adapted from Hollenbeck et al., 1989; $\alpha = .82$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item during your *job/internship search in general*:

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

56. I am strongly committed to pursuing my job/internship search goal.
57. I am willing to put forth a great deal of effort beyond what I'd normally do to achieve my job/internship search goal.
58. Quite frankly, I don't care if I achieve my job/internship search goal or not.
59. There is not much to be gained by trying to achieve my job/internship search goal.
60. It wouldn't take much to make me abandon my job/internship search goal.
61. It's unrealistic for me to expect to reach my job/internship search goal.
62. I think my job/internship search goal is a good goal to shoot for.

Tolerance for Stress (Simons & Gaher, 2005; $\alpha = .86$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

63. Feeling distressed or upset is unbearable to me.
64. I can't handle feeling distress or upset.
65. There's nothing worse than feeling distressed or upset.
66. When I feel distressed or upset, all I can think about is how bad I feel.
67. My feelings of distress are so intense that they completely take me over.
68. When I feel distressed or upset, I cannot help but concentrate on how bad the distress actually feels.
69. I can tolerate being distressed or upset as well as most people.
70. My feelings of distress or being upset are not acceptable.
71. Other people seem to be able to tolerate feeling distressed or upset better than I can.
72. Being distressed or upset is always a major ordeal for me.
73. I am ashamed of myself when I feel distressed or upset.
74. I'll do anything to avoid feeling distressed or upset.
75. I'll do anything to stop feeling distressed or upset.
76. When I feel distressed or upset, I must do something about it immediately.

General Defensive Pessimism (Norem, 2001; $\alpha = .87$)

Instructions: Think of a situation where you wanted to do your best. It may be related to work, your social life, or to any of your goals. When you answer the following questions, please think about how you prepare for that kind of situation. Rate how true each statement is for you *in general* using the following scale.

(1 = *not at all true of me*; 7 = *very true of me*)

77. I often start out expecting the worst, even though I will probably do OK.
78. I worry about how things will turn out.
79. I carefully consider all possible outcomes.
80. I often worry that I won't be able to carry through my intentions.
81. I spend lots of time imagining what could go wrong.
82. I imagine how I would feel if things went badly.
83. I try to picture how I could fix things if something went wrong.
84. I'm careful not to become overconfident in these situations.
85. I spend a lot of time planning when one of these situations is coming up.
86. I imagine how I would feel if things went well.
87. In these situations, sometimes I worry more about looking like a fool than doing really well.
88. Considering what can go wrong helps me to prepare.

Job Search Anxiety (adapted from McCarthy et al., in press; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; $\alpha = .92$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experience each of the following *in thinking about your job/internship search in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

89. I feel overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly in my job/internship search.
90. I worry that my job/internship search performance will be lower than that of others who are searching for a job/internship.
91. I feel nervous and apprehensive about not being able to meet my job/internship search targets.
92. I worry about not receiving a positive job/internship search outcome.
93. I feel anxious that I will not be able to perform well in my job/internship search.
94. I worry about whether recruiters will consider me to be a good person for the jobs/internships I apply to.
95. I worry that I will not be able to successfully manage the demands of my job/internship search.
96. I worry about whether my job/internship search performance will be good enough.

Job Search Excitement (adapted from McCarthy et al., in press; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; $\alpha = .92$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experience each of the following *in thinking about your job/internship search in general* (not how you feel today, but how you usually feel about each item).

(1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

97. I feel excited by thoughts of doing well in my job/internship search.
98. I feel enthusiastic that my job/internship search performance will be higher than that of others who are searching for a job/internship.
99. I feel excited about being able to meet my job/internship search targets.
100. I feel enthusiastic about receiving a positive job/internship search outcome.
101. I feel excited that I will be able to perform well in my job/internship search.
102. I feel excited that recruiters will consider me to be a good person for the jobs/internships I apply to.
103. I feel enthusiastic that I will be able to successfully manage the demands of my job/internship search.
104. I feel excited that my job/internship search performance will be good enough.

**Level 1 Supplemental Measures
Sunday-Monday Survey**

Job Search Anxiety (adapted from McCarthy et al., in press; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004; $\alpha = .93$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experiencing each of the following *in thinking about your upcoming week of job/internship seeking*: (1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

1. I feel overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly in my job/internship search.
2. I worry that my job/internship search performance will be lower than that of others who are searching for a job/internship.
3. I feel nervous and apprehensive about not being able to meet my job/internship search targets.
4. I worry about not receiving a positive job/internship search outcome.
5. I feel anxious that I will not be able to perform well in my job/internship search.
6. I worry about whether recruiters will consider me to be a good person for the jobs/internships I apply to.
7. I worry that I will not be able to successfully manage the demands of my job/internship search.
8. I worry about whether my job/internship search performance will be good enough.

Job Search Excitement (adapted from McCarthy et al., in press; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004 $\alpha = .94$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate the extent to which you are experiencing each of the following *in thinking about your upcoming week of job/internship seeking*: (1 = not at all; 2 = a little; 3 = a moderate amount; 4 = quite a bit; 5 = a great deal)

9. I feel excited by thoughts of doing well in my job/internship search.
10. I feel enthusiastic that my job/internship search performance will be higher than that of others who are searching for a job/internship.
11. I feel excited about being able to meet my job/internship search targets.
12. I feel enthusiastic about receiving a positive job/internship search outcome.
13. I feel excited that I will be able to perform well in my job/internship search.
14. I feel excited that recruiters will consider me to be a good person for the jobs/internships I apply to.
15. I feel enthusiastic that I will be able to successfully manage the demands of my job/internship search.
16. I feel excited that my job/internship search performance will be good enough.

Challenge/Hindrance appraisals of job search during the pandemic (adapted from LePine, Zhang, Crawford, & Rich, 2016; Challenge Appraisal $\alpha = .82$; Hindrance Appraisal $\alpha = .89$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in thinking about your upcoming week of job/internship seeking*: (1= *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Challenge Appraisals

1. Working to acquire a job/internship will help to improve my personal growth and well-being.
2. I feel the demands of my job/internship search will challenge me to achieve personal goals and accomplishments.
3. I feel that engaging in job/internship seeking will promote my personal accomplishment.

Hindrance Appraisals

4. Working to acquire a job/internship thwarts my personal growth and well-being.
5. I feel the demands of my job/internship search will constrain my achievement of personal goals and development.
6. I feel that engaging in job/internship seeking will hinder my personal accomplishment.

**Level 1 Supplemental Measures
Friday-Saturday Survey**

Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Gross & John, 2003; Reappraisal Factor $\alpha = .87$; Suppression Factor $\alpha = .84$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item *in thinking about your past week of job/internship seeking:*

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Reappraisal factor

1. I controlled my emotions by changing the way I thought about the situation I'm in.
2. When I wanted to feel less anxiety, I changed the way I was thinking about the situation.
3. When I wanted to feel more excitement, I changed the way I was thinking about the situation.
4. When I wanted to feel more excitement, I changed what I was thinking about.
5. When I wanted to feel less anxiety, I changed what I was thinking about.
6. When I'm faced with an anxious situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me be excited.

Suppression factor

7. I controlled my emotions by not expressing them.
8. When I felt anxious, I made sure not to express it.
9. I kept my emotions to myself.
10. When I am felt excited, I was careful not to express it.

Dream Job Search Effort (Gabriel et al., 2021; $\alpha = .84$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item in regards to *your job and/or internship search over the past week.*

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

11. I applied for jobs that I would consider to be "dream jobs"
12. I am optimistic that I will find my dream job.
13. I am hopeful that the position I end up in will be my dream job.
14. I applied for jobs that I am passionate about.
15. I am optimistic that the job I end up in will give me immense personal satisfaction.
16. I am hopeful that I will end up in a job that is deeply moving and gratifying for me.

Approach/Avoidance (adapted from Johnson, Chang et al., 2013; Approach $\alpha = .86$; Avoidance $\alpha = .88$)

Instructions: Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item in regards to *your job and/or internship search over the past week*.

(1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*)

Approach Motives

17. My goal in my job search was to fulfil my potential to the fullest in my job search.
18. I focused on successful experiences that occurred while job searching.
19. In general, I tended to think about positive aspects of my job search.
20. I saw my job search as a way for me to fulfil my hopes, wishes and aspirations.
21. I thought about the positive outcomes that my job search can bring me.
22. I felt happy when I accomplished a lot at in my job search.

Avoidance Motives

23. I focused on failure experiences that occurred while job searching.
24. I was fearful about failing to prevent negative outcomes in my job search.
25. I tended to think about negative aspects of my job search.
26. I thought about the negative outcomes associated with my job search.
27. I felt anxious when I could not meet my responsibilities in my job search.
28. I sometimes felt anxious job searching.

Networking Intensity (Wanberg et al., 2000; $\alpha = .88$)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you have done the following *over the last week of job and/or internship seeking*.

(1 = *not at all*; 5 = *very much*)

Over the past week of job and/or internship seeking, I...

29. Contacted people you know to ask for their advice or leads regarding your job/internship search.
30. Called or visited someone just to get more information about a certain job/internship or place to work.
31. Asked for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about your career or industry.
32. Secured leads from contacts or acquaintances regarding a person to contact for information that would help you in your job/internship search.
33. Talked with friends or relatives about possible job/internship leads.
34. Spoke with previous employers or business acquaintances about their knowing of potential job/internship leads.

Job Search Intensity (adapted from Blau, 1994; Fang & Saks, 2020; Sun et al., 2013; $\alpha = .91$)

Instructions: Please rate the extent to which you have done the following *over the last week of job and/or internship seeking*.

(1 = *not at all*; 5 = *very much*; P = *passive*, A = *active* per Blau, 1994)

Over the past week of job and/or internship seeking, I...

35. Read the help wanted/classified ads in a newspaper, journal, or professional association. P
36. Listed myself as a job applicant in a newspaper, journal, or professional association. A
37. Prepared/revised my resume. P
38. Sent out resumes to potential employers. A
39. Filled out a job application. A
40. Read a book or article about getting a job or changing jobs. P
41. Had a job interview with a prospective employer. A
42. Talked with friends or relatives about possible job leads. P
43. Contacted an employment agency, executive search firm, or state employee service. A
44. Spoke with previous employers or business acquaintances about their knowing of potential job leads. P
45. Telephoned a prospective employer. A
46. Used current within university/company resources (e.g., career center/colleagues) to generate potential job leads. P
47. Posted your resume on job recruitment websites.
48. Attended company recruitment talks.
49. Used the internet to research internship- and job-related information.
50. Attended networking events.

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