Establishing a Positive Emotional Climate to Create 21st-Century Organizational Change

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Looking back on the 20th century, the vision of business has often been depicted by a self-interested, mechanistic manufacturing operation. Organizations that support this effort were designed to achieve efficient and effective production by people who were viewed merely as resources. Pictures from this period reflect factory smokestacks puffing away with dirty and dreary hues of grey shadows looming over the inhabiting workers. Today's vision and design of the organization has moved away from this picture, revealing an awareness of the human elements present in daily organizational life. Recognizing that people's emotions influence performance has created a demonstrable shift in organizational behavior, as theories used to describe and explain performance are moving to incorporate features that address this affective component. Researchers have been steadily making the move to show how employee decisions and actions are inextricably linked to emotions at the personal, interpersonal, and organizational levels (e.g., Dehler & Welsch, 1994; Elfenbein, 2007;

Hochschild, 1983). Although early American aphorisms, such as Benjamin Franklin's "time is money" (1748) still ring true in the minds of many, most managers today would also acknowledge that a good deal of their time is spent dealing with the emotional aspects of workplace enterprise.

With so much of life spent working with others, it is no surprise that the workplace becomes the foundation for a variety of experiences and social interactions that spur a multitude of emotional responses. One could think of the joy one feels when a project has been successfully completed, the gratitude one experiences when a mentor takes the time to guide and support him or her, the pride in being part of a productive team, or the enthusiasm experienced when starting a challenging and interesting new task. In recent years, positive psychologists and positive organizational scholars have been intrigued by the potential benefits that positive emotions have to offer employees. Their research has demonstrated how experiences that foster emotions such as interest, joy, pride, and appreciation

cultivate adaptive qualities that help people work together with interactive strength.

This chapter examines how the benefits of positive emotions serve as a mechanism to achieve *transformative cooperation,* contributing to an organization's process of dynamic change. It begins with an introduction to the concept of transformative cooperation and follows with the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001; 2009). This guides the theory-building effort to describe how transformative cooperation and positive emotional climates support deep change within individuals, organizations, and communities. After these propositions have been set forth, an exploration of how they can be applied to a salient issue in today's workplace—ecological sustainability—takes place.

TRANSFORMATIVE COOPERATION

In the context of an organizational setting, *transformation* is a fundamental shift in how people view, understand, interpret, or make use of their organization and their role within it. Aspects of the phenomenon are described by change management scholars, who refer to second-order, radical, or gamma change (e.g., Golembiewski, Billingsely, & Yeager, 1979). These labels depict change that goes to the very root of how people think about and define their organization and work. This is in contrast to first-order or alpha change, which incrementally focuses on resolving specific problems (Bartunek & Moch, 1987). *Cooperation,* also in the context of an organizational setting, can be viewed as an association of people who come together to produce output that provides those involved with something of value. It entails an engaged effort deemed worthwhile and meaningful by its participants. It is a collaborative endeavor where people work together to achieve mutual benefit as a result of their shared actions (Agnes & Laird, 1996).

These two terms combine to create a specific type of change and the means to achieve it: *transformative cooperation* (Sekerka & Fredrickson, 2008). This is an effort—initiated by people working together—to create a fundamental change in an organizational setting. People pool their knowledge, skills, and passion and collectively apply them toward the conceptualization and construction of a novel and dynamic vision for the future. It is not about correcting problems, but rather, it is a deliberate and continuous effort of originality toward the creation of new forms of organizing that provide shared value and mutual benefits for all involved. Because it is generative, transformative cooperation cannot be declared, ordered, or implemented via mandate. Transformative cooperation is a cooperative effort, and for it to be effectively considered an organization-wide actuality, efforts need to come from both bottom-up and top-down: Organizational members must have power to cocreate the new processes and practices, and leadership needs to model support for such initiatives and establish buy-in. As such, transformative cooperation is likely to happen first within small groups and units from the top and/or bottom before involving the entire organization. If transformative cooperation is to continue, new practices need to be integrated into ongoing daily operations, and shared power for operations must be continually endorsed.

To explore how transformative cooperation can be initiated and sustained, this chapter is interested in how the benefits of positive emotions can contribute to this process, starting at the individual level and working its way through small groups within an organization. How might the feelings of interest, appreciation, and gratitude support such an effort? How do positive emotions contribute to organizational strength and sustained development? This chapter argues that positive emotions stem from transformative cooperation in

the workplace, then broaden and build organizational identification and relational strength, thereby expanding individuals and, eventually, the entire organization. In this way, transformative cooperation is a type of deep change that stems from a positive psychological perspective.

BROADEN-AND-BUILD THEORY

The basis of this discussion stems from Barbara L. Fredrickson's (1998, 2001; 2009) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. The theory states that positive emotions (e.g., joy, interest, appreciation) function in the short term to broaden one's thought-action repertoire and thereby build one's cognitive, social, psychological, and/or physical resources over the long term.

The Broaden Effects

Positive emotions have been experimentally shown to broaden people's cognitions and behaviors, thereby suggesting causal effects of positive emotions. Carlos A. Estrada, Alice M. Isen, and Mark J. Young (1997) tested the effects of positive states on a wide range of cognitive outcomes, ranging from creativity puzzles to simulations of complex, life-or-death work situations. Their findings are supportive of the broaden features of Fredrickson's theory so that positive emotions produce patterns of notably unusual thought (Isen, Johnson, Mertz, & Robinson, 1985), flexibility and inclusion (Isen & Daubman, 1984), creativity (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987), and receptivity to new information (Estrada et al., 1997). In addition, recent affective neuroscience research by Taylor W. Schmitz, Eve De Rosa, and Adam K. Anderson (2009) demonstrates the influence of positive affect on perceptual encoding processes that occur prior to higher-order thought processes. Positive states have been shown to promote perceptual

encoding of peripheral information, whereas negative states decrease the likelihood of this response capability. The broaden aspects of positive emotions also influence personally relevant behavior. For example, Fredrickson and Christine Branigan (2005) induced varied forms of emotions in people, followed with a separate task that asked participants to list all the things that they felt like doing right then, given their current emotional state. People induced to feel positive emotions listed more and more varied potential actions as compared to those feeling no emotions or feeling negative emotions.

At the interpersonal level, positive emotions have been associated with enhanced attention to others and reduced distinctions between the self and others. For example, when newly paired college roommates were studied, researchers found that those students who experienced more positive emotions reported a greater sense of "oneness" between themselves and their new roommate, moving to develop a more complex understanding of this person (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). Furthermore, induced positive emotions have been shown to increase trust between acquaintances (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005) and may underlie the creation of several types of bonds and opportunities for interdependence (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2006; Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). Such experimental evidence demonstrates the many ways that positive emotions broaden people's mindsets, extending their capacity for ways to view oneself, others, and the social world.

The Build Effects

The build effects of positive emotions are perhaps shown most demonstratively outside laboratory conditions. Specifically, in the field of change management, both researchers and practitioners have examined positive emotions. Findings support the notion that, in contrast to negative emotions,

positive emotions have adaptive benefits that go beyond survival mechanisms, actually helping to bolster strength in organizational settings (Sekerka, Brumbaugh, Rosa, & Cooperrider, 2006). Importantly, for transformative cooperation, positive emotions signal both present-moment (Diener, Sandvik, & Pavot, 1991) and long-term optimal functioning (Fredrickson, 1998, 2000a).

The notion of positive emotions helping to build capacity reflects the fact that the benefits of positive emotions extend beyond simply feeling good at any given moment. The terms, as suggested by the theory's name, are corollary: broadening actually builds enduring personal resources. These resources can emerge in several different forms, including cognitive (e.g., expert knowledge, intellectual complexity), social (e.g., friendships, social support networks), psychological (e.g., resilience, optimism), and physical (e.g., health, longevity). Rather than merely signaling optimal functioning, they actually help to generate intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational growth.

Many correlational studies have emerged from organizational behavior suggesting that positive emotions do indeed build resources. Positive emotions have been linked with work achievement, high-quality social environments (Staw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1994), and creativity (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005), and scholars continue to investigate how positive approaches are associated with enhanced satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Martin, 2005). Moreover, positive emotions are associated with other beneficial outcomes, such as greater persistence, favorable reactions to others, and helping behaviors (Haidt, 2000).

Prospective studies have also linked the influence of a positive affective disposition to higher income and job satisfaction and less likelihood of unemployment in later years. Ed Diener, Carol Nickerson, Richard E. Lucas, and Ed Sandvik (2002) explain how positive mood is likely to be linked to motiva-

tional factors that help individuals anticipate success and become more willing to tackle challenges. For example, cheerful people might interpret obstacles or failures as temporary setbacks with external causes; hence, they are more likely to persevere. Positive affect is associated not only with greater work achievement, but also with having an extensive and high-quality social milieu. The positive emotional climates generated by enthusiastic "can-do" people are known to contribute to enhanced performance, with their presence increasing company sales and number of customers (George, 1998).

Experimental evidence of the build effect is now beginning to emerge from social psychological studies. In a recent study, Fredrickson, Michael A. Cohn, Kimberly A. Coffey, Jolynn Pek, and Sandra M. Finkel (2008) followed participants who were randomly assigned to either experience more positive emotional experiences (promoted via loving-kindness meditation workshops), or a control condition. Over 7 weeks of meditation sessions and 2 weeks afterward, participants in the loving-kindness meditation group reported feeling greater levels of mindfulness, acceptance of oneself, positive relations with others, better physical health, and less depression symptoms.
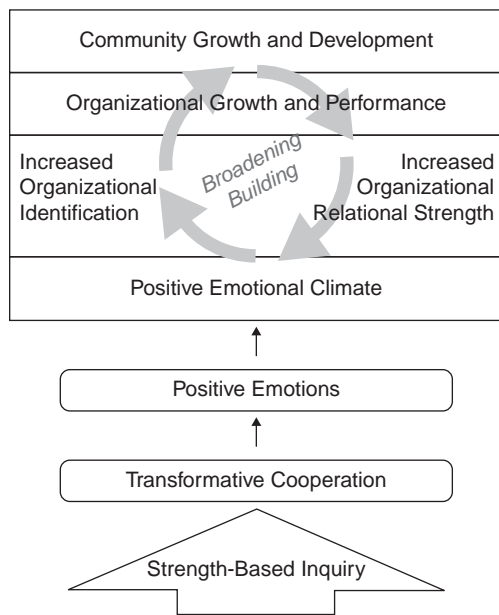
POSITIVE EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Scientific management-based programs, characterized by the restructuring and engineering processes of strategic change, are typically reactions to dysfunction. However, generating enduring positive change in the workplace requires a transformational approach. Although both emotions and cognitions are integral components in successfully creating, accepting, and implementing transformation, this chapter views emotions—specifically positive emotions—as key resources to energize and sustain the process.

Because change dynamics depends upon the entire organization to make prolonged commitments, the emotional dimension of the workplace enterprise seems a more apt place to start (and later sustain) change.

Research to understand positive emotions has deepened understanding of the importance of affect in the workplace. Positive emotions are associated with helping individuals establish positive meaning in their job and organizational role (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and to stimulate competence, achievement, involvement, significance, and social connection (Fredrickson, 2000a; Folkman, 1997; Ryff & Singer, 1998). When individuals support others to seek positive meaning in their work, bringing forward what

they value most, gratitude and enthusiasm tend to emerge. Generally speaking, positive emotions, in contrast to negative emotions, are related to high-quality team-member exchanges (Tse & Dasborough, 2008) and can stimulate cooperation in route to change (Sekerka et al., 2006). Furthermore, research by James B. Avey, Tara S. Wernsing, and Fred Luthans (2008) illustrates that psychological capital (e.g., optimism, hope, resilience) favorably impacts employees' attitudes and behaviors about organizational change, specifically through positive emotions.

Drawing on what has been described thus far, a theoretical model comprised of five main propositions is presented. These propositions serve as a springboard to extend the present understanding of how positive emotions influence organizational development and change (ODC). In general, this chapter argues that positive emotions are fueled by transformative cooperation (fostered through *strength-based inquiry*, described below) that contributes to a positive emotional climate, ultimately enabling the dynamic benefits of broaden-and-build effects of positive emotions (see Figure 7.1).

Generating Transformative Cooperation

To foster transformative cooperation, research in change management emphasizes that the atmosphere should be a positive one. Shaul Fox, Yair Amichai-Hamburger, and Edward A. Evans (2001) describe the importance of transmitting information in aesthetically pleasing surroundings via a pleasant and intimate manner, in contrast to a formal, instructive, and cold manner that can manifest conflict between people's emotions and cognitions. In positive environments, one's emotions and cognitions coordinate such that when people feel good about what they are doing, they are more inclined to cooperate and engage in action.

Figure 7.1 The Broaden-and-Build Effects of Positive Emotions Through Transformative Cooperation. By engaging in strength-based inquiry, transformative cooperation helps to fuel the beneficial effects of positive emotions at the individual, relational, organizational, and community levels.

Getting involved and feeling like one's voice is being heard is one example (Sekerka & Goosby Smith, 2003), or becoming curious and engaged in something of interest (Sekerka, 2008; Kashdan, Rose, & Fincham, 2004) is another example. To jumpstart and sustain the sequential benefits of positive emotions spurred from an ODC process, successful impacts at both the individual and collective levels are essential.

Strength-based inquiry[1] is a useful pathway to transformative cooperation. Looking at what people value most—what gives life to employees' work experience—emboldens collectively experienced positive emotions that support personal and organizational growth. Through a variety of collaborative exercises, strength-based ODC techniques are designed to encourage people to share positive memories through stories, testimonials, and discussions that outline what they appreciate about their work life. An *appreciative inquiry* (AI) summit is an example of how to create a positive emotionally charged event that, when followed by the implementation of practices that support ongoing positive interactions, can become a sustained practice (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1999). Appreciative inquiry is an example of strength-based inquiry, a process where people look at the best of their organization and themselves as the focal point for change. Rather than looking at problems and the symptoms of dysfunction, researchers use questions that help individuals and collectives look at what contributes to their success, well-being, and thriving as the catalyst for growth and development.

As employees engage in strength-based inquiry, appreciative dialogues occur in pairs, small groups, and in organization-wide forums, weaving together every level, function, and stakeholder into the process. As people work together to highlight, observe, and define their organization's positive core, they identify what is most valued.

In this manner, employees cooperatively develop new strategies to design their shared vision for the future, a process referred to as *socially constructing reality* (Gergen, 2001). Once the ideal vision is imagined, participants ascertain what needs to be done and how they can work together to achieve it. Building from existing assets, deemed as the positive core of their personal and collective strengths, employees begin a process of self-directed organizing (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001). Together, such actions have also been shown to produce immediate positive psychophysiological changes in participants, including a reduction in negative affect, lowered heart rate, and favorable changes in heart rate variability (Sekerka & McCraty, 2004).

Throughout this process, employees align themselves in new and unique ways by forming groups and taking on new roles and functions. They rally around shared strengths, generating positive energy via interest and emotions such as enthusiasm, appreciation, and hope. As a result of this effort, new organizational relationships emerge. The act of working on a collective effort (using positive experiences as levers for ODC) supports the creative thinking necessary for envisaging an innovative future. This process is explicit, establishes joint ownership or buy-in from the outset, and initiates transformative cooperation. Notably, this process has been conducted with favorable results in thousands of organizations, of all types and forms, ranging from the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to a variety of corporations including Green Mountain Coffee, Roadway Express, and Canadian Tire (visit http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu for more detail on this).

When people work in a strength-based inquiry intervention, the process of transformative cooperation generates a positive emotional climate. From here, workplace routines can change by linking newly created

action steps to strategy, embedding a focus on positive change into employees' objectives and goals. Given the distinct social origins of positive emotions and general trend that people experience them when interacting with others (e.g., Vittengl & Holt, 2000; Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992), it is no surprise that people feel good when working together to tap and create organizational value. As positively charged discovery continues, a cascade of ideas stimulates more activity and innovation. Once transformative cooperation is initiated, it is expected that it will continue to generate positive experiences within the organization as it builds capacity through inclusion and empowerment. This is expressed as follows:

> Proposition 1: Through strength-based inquiry, employees who work together to achieve transformative cooperation will experience positive emotions that contribute to a positive emotional climate.

As described earlier, positive emotions broaden one's scope of attention and habitual modes of thinking and acting. In addition, positive emotions influence how people see themselves, broadening the scope of self-perception to include close others (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). As the distinguishing line between the self and others becomes blurred and harder to delineate, people can begin to internally adopt the characteristics of others, viewing the other person as acceptable or part of their own repertoire. To the extent that people view their coworkers or organization as a part of themselves—in other words, experience *organizational identification*—resource allocation can then be perceived as shared ownership rather than individual property.

The inclusion of others in how people see themselves offers people a wider perspective of how they can view the world. With this wider perspective, employees are better able to focus on others with appreciation and build trust; this built trust then promotes increased ease within a social context. Conversely, when people focus on differences and problems, negative emotions may be elevated and an us-versus-them mindset that can build resentments (Gilmore, Shea, & Useem, 1997). This is typically followed by blaming and finger-pointing as people try to target the causes of their problems (Sekerka, Zolin, & Goosby Smith, 2009). A positive approach using strength-based inquiry can help facilitate reframing as an expansion of identity, augmenting prior assumptions and perspectives. To evoke transformative cooperation, people need to view themselves and others in a more flexible manner. Both the organization and employees' roles need to be recast with new meaning.

For example, perhaps managers frame events from a political perspective, where resources are scarce and competition is fierce. They can use current organizational strengths as a catalyst to shift this framework of understanding by crafting alternative starting assumptions. Beliefs associated with competition and self-interest can fall away as people learn about and choose to value shared achievement and become willing to truly share the benefits of success with others. The cognitive broadening that positive emotions trigger is expected to contribute to this process, bringing a wider view into focus, one that is more inclusive and represents a more cooperative stance.

Given that positive emotions contribute to an expansion of self-concept, experiences associated with gratitude, appreciation, and other positive emotions are expected to increase organizational identification (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). As employees engage in positive experiences that call for their participation in cocreating what it means to be at work, they will see themselves more closely aligned with their organization. This is expressed as follows:

Proposition 2: A positive emotional climate in organizations will contribute to an increase in organizational identification.

Moving beyond the short-term broaden effects of positive emotions, this chapter argues that positive emotions also build capacity in organizations. More specifically, they serve to help enhance bonds and connections between people in an organization, referred throughout this chapter as *organizational relational strength*. As described earlier, assets accrued during positive emotional states are durable and outlast the transient states that led to their acquisition. People who regularly experience positive emotions are not stagnant. Instead, they continually grow toward further optimal functioning (Fredrickson, 2003; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). This chapter suggests that this same principle holds true when using strength-based approaches to instill transformative cooperation. When feelings of appreciation are cultivated, employees forge teams, coalitions, and opportunity circles, working together to stimulate ideas, achieve shared goals, and foster ongoing learning (Neville, 2008).

Evidence suggests that people induced to feel positive emotions become more helpful to others than those in neutral emotional states. Such findings have been demonstrated in social psychological experiments (Isen, 1987) as well as by research conducted in workplace settings (George, 1998). This phenomenon occurs because people experiencing positive emotions tend to be more flexible, creative, empathic, compassionate, and respectful of others. But being helpful not only springs from positive emotional states—it can also produce them. For example, those who give help may feel proud of their actions, and this experience not only creates a momentary boost in self-esteem, but also can prompt people to envisage future achievements in similar domains (Fredrickson, 2000b). Thus, to the extent that helping others instills positive emotions, it may motivate people to help again in the future.

Research in social psychology also suggests that there is a robust reciprocal association between the positive emotion gratitude and social support, which serves to improve organizational relational strength. Just as the person who gives help experiences positive emotions, the one who receives it is also likely to feel gratitude. Gratitude not only feels good, but also produces a myriad of beneficial social outcomes (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008; McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, & Larson, 2001). Gratitude motivates and reinforces social actions in both the giver and receiver of help by inspiring positive action. Research shows that grateful people often feel the urge to "give back" to those who have helped them or to "pay it forward" to others. Thus, there is a reciprocal nature of good deeds: As the act of giving thanks or acknowledgment rewards the help-givers, this gratitude then reinforces the positive action and makes people feel appreciated.

Taking this information together, this chapter suggests that when organizations continue to cultivate a positive emotional climate, they will benefit from an increase in the strength of people's relationships. This is expressed as follows:

Proposition 3: A positive emotional climate in organizations will contribute to an increase in organizational relational strength.

Positive emotions can spread throughout organizations, among members, and to customers, as illustrated by the reverberation of appreciation and gratitude. The effects of experiencing positive emotions can accumulate, compound, and, ultimately, serve to strengthen the collective. Furthermore, they promote constructive interpersonal engagement and encourage trust, which

predicts effective and integrative negotiations (Anderson & Thompson, 2004), and the desire to contribute to the effectiveness of one's organization (Fredrickson, 2000b). Such findings suggest a relationship between positive emotions and their capacity-building potential within workplace settings, particularly via organizational identification and relational strength. This gives the sense of the broaden-and-build effects, reflecting the longitudinal macro outcomes associated with earlier positive emotional experiences and the meaningful interpersonal encounters that resulted from them.

A range of empirical evidence supports this prediction, albeit indirectly. For instance, researchers at the Gallup Organization frequently examine links between employee engagement and favorable business outcomes, such as employee turnover, customer loyalty, net sales, and financial revenues (Fleming, 2000a, 2000b; Harter, 2000). Also, because leaders often drive how employees feel within an organization, emotions expressed from the "top" can truly make a difference in the organization's climate. Hakan Ozcelik, Nancy Langton, and Howard Aldrich (2008) have shown that leadership practices that encourage and cultivate a positive emotional climate also contribute to higher revenue and growth for the organization.

Given that positive emotions contribute to organizational identification and relational strength, this adds value to the organization by increasing relational expansion, which in turn increases social capital. The presence of these resources together can contribute to growth and favorable performance outcomes, an antecedent for organizational effectiveness. This expectation is expressed as follows:

> Proposition 4: An increase in organizational identification and relational strength will contribute to organizational growth and performance.

As transformative cooperation continues to be reinforced by positive emotions, organizations that benefit from this type of positive environment will see the benefits extend outward to the community. With sustained positive emotional climates that foster relational strength and growth, more people are expected to become included in the organization as part of the larger whole (Barros & Cooperrider, 2000). More specifically, the claim is that positive emotions energize new organizational forms that emerge from transformative cooperation, which set the stage for growth and development that can move outward into the community. The overarching implication is that the positive emotions of employees' momentary experiences can be both long-range indicators and generators of optimal organizational functioning. Once initiated, and as cycles of transformative cooperation continue, positive emotional experiences in the workplace will help generate outcomes that make an impact at the community level. This expectation is stated as follows:

> Proposition 5: An increase in organizational growth and performance will contribute to the community's growth and development.

An underlying assumption is that organizations are uniquely positioned to help build a better society. Moreover, employees need to be encouraged to consider and evaluate the organization's broader impact and to work collectively to identify opportunities where they can make a favorable influence on the community as part of their operations. A climate of moral sensitivity, for example, encourages empathy, or the feeling of deep concern for society and the environment (Baucus, Norton, Baucus, & Human, 2008). Similarly, a climate of positive emotions in the workplace encourages empathy, sensitivity, and care (Arnaud & Sekerka, 2010), qualities needed for an organization to rally behind broader impacts on the

community. Below, these ideas for how positive emotional climates can create organizational change by mapping our propositions to achieving sustainable enterprise, a salient issue in today's workplace, are applied.

AN APPLICATION: POSITIVELY GREEN

Today's organizational leaders are experiencing pressure to consider corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a part of their business model. As CSR becomes an expected way of doing business, organizations will have to address a myriad of ecological, social, and economic concerns (Adams, Frost, & Webber, 2004). This means going beyond the sole purpose of a firm as creating wealth for shareholders. Increasingly, the goal is to conduct business in such a way that addresses fairness to people and the planet in alignment with ensuring profitable performance. The ecological dimension of CSR entails discussion about the "greening" of industry, which refers to ecologically driven business practices. Although such efforts can be profit enhancing, this chapter suggests that the motives for environmental sustainability must go beyond the establishment of energy savings and efforts to advance underdeveloped green consumer markets. The term *sustainable enterprise* is used here to refer to organizations that choose to go beyond compliance demands to responsibly ensure the safety, care, and protection of the planet as they work to achieve their economic goals. As leaders consider this challenge, how might the benefits of positive emotions help to create and support such a fundamental shift in the way that business is conducted?

The cornerstone to sustainable enterprise is innovation (Arnaud & Sekerka, 2010). Those willing to make greening their mission will need to gather information, seek out solutions, and creatively generate new concepts and ideas. To prompt a fundamental shift in the way organizations view business, they will need to use their relational assets as levers for creating value and building more capacity. It is, therefore, expected that sustainable development will require management to set aside their traditional win-lose survivalist modalities. For a more generative approach, businesses will have to make a collective shift from "greed is good" to "green is good." This calls for the use of change management techniques that foster development rather than impose incremental fixes to immediate problems. Transformational cooperation will be essential if leaders hope to dislodge their current underlying assumptions so that truly novel views, innovations, and synergy can emerge around sustainable enterprise.

When the purpose of an organization incorporates values that transcend self-interest, people sense that they are part of a much larger mission. In terms of sustainable enterprise, shareholder interests need to be complemented by a sincere regard and respect for the planet. Here, profit does not take precedence over ecological concerns; rather, stakeholder interests are valued in terms of what is created and how work is accomplished. As argued by John A. Parnell (2008), efforts to develop and incorporate ecologically minded practices and processes in how business is conducted on a daily basis require actions and strategies that target the sustainability of the natural environment as part of an organization's overall purpose. Similar to how positive emotions can increase self–other overlap, organizations ocommitted to the concept of "doing well and doing good" tend to have a relationship with the planet and her resources as they move toward achieving their mission (Friedland, 2009). To the extent that

people view other people and the planet as an extension of themselves, responsibility toward them is likely to be adopted. This shift and broadened identity will be essential if global resources are to be viewed as a collective responsibility for all to preserve and maintain.

As for longer-term implications, how might the cultivation of positive emotional climates yield sustainable enterprise? Prior research has shown that when a positive workplace environment is linked with mobilization (in this case, for sustainable development), those engaged often experience a transformation to assume an activist identity (Meyer, 2006). Sally Russell and Andrew Griffiths (2008) integrated environmental psychology and management to consider how issues of ownership and organizational identification relate to the emotionality of pro-environmental organizational behavior. The research reflects that when people are supported and become actively interested in and enthusiastic about actions that protect the environment, positive emotions are further complemented by a determination to direct attention toward goal-directed behaviors (Arnaud & Sekerka, 2010). This type of dedicated involvement promotes further discovery, underwriting people's commitment toward continued engagement in the shared activity. Positive affective experiences can help fuel the necessary creativity and sustained inquiry that can help ensure a prolonged focus on sustainable enterprise.

As employees work to develop new methods, technologies, and processes that support sustainability in practice, there will undoubtedly be numerous challenges and obstacles to overcome. Positive emotions, with their durable benefits, can help people to rebound from inevitable challenges in times of difficulty. This illustrates the link between positive emotions and their role in helping to transform individuals to become more resilient

and socially integrated over time. Such benefits are ideally suited toward developing organizations that want to become verdant in their business practices. A commitment to go green means that organizational relational strength will contribute to the organization's growth and performance over time, regardless of setbacks that may temporarily hinder progression.

The incremental nature of transformational cooperation is resourced by positive emotions, which energize a more holistic stance. Key to this effort is that there is a respect for values that go beyond the self, which can be actualized through empathy—feeling the feelings of others. But sustainable enterprise will only work when the commitment to it is continually renewed. Thus, partnerships need to be forged between the employees and their organizations and between organizations and their institutional stakeholders. As this cycle of value-creation is established, individuals, small groups and units, organizations, institutions, and governments can be transformed into more environmentally minded entities that work in collaboration with one another. In so doing, people and the organizations that they represent can become more aware and respectful of one another. If sustainable enterprise becomes a shared goal with mutual benefits for all engaged, the positive emotional climates that stem from them will instill a reflexive process that continues to reaffirm and favorably endorse the ongoing effort. In this way, the organizational identification and relational strength built up over time can continue to fuel the development that can extend out to the global community.

A Word About the Negative

To potentially achieve such robust outcomes, the cultivation and extension of positive emotions in the workplace must

not only be supported, but also how to effectively address and draw strength from negative emotions must be understood. As P. Alex Linley, Stephen Joseph, Susan Harrington, and Alex M. Wood (2006) note, if positive psychology and its specialized disciplines hope to achieve long-term success, the integration of disorder and dysfunction with achievement, aspirations, and performance needs examination. For instance, Michele M. Tugade and Fredrickson (2004, 2007) showed that resilient individuals do not ignore negative emotions—they certainly report fear and sadness in stressful situations (e.g., after the 9/11 attacks). But interestingly, resilient people are better able to find positive meaning within adversity to cultivate positive emotions as well. Similarly, Jeff T. Larsen, Scott H. Hemenover, Catherine J. Norris, and John T. Cacioppo (2003) acknowledge the ability to manage, grapple with, and work through both positive and negative affective events (rather than simply reducing the negative) as a human strength.

A quick overview of positivity ratio studies also nicely illustrates the value of negative emotions. In a positivity ratio, the number of positive moments constitutes the numerator, and the number of negative moments is plugged in as the denominator. Notably, across various studies, no ratios have a denominator of zero. Such a state would likely be associated with mania, rather than with a healthy, balanced experience. Instead, high ratios of people's experience of positive-to-negative emotions are associated with doing well, whereas low positive ratios (lower than 1:1) are associated with doing poorly. For example, positive-to-negative ratios greater than 3:1 in daily life predict one's overall subjective well-being (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005), 4:1 relates to optimal states of mind (Schwartz et al., 2002), 5:1

to profitable and well-regarded business teams (Losada, 1999), and 6:1 are linked with more stable relationships (Gottman, 1994).

The typical worker in today's generation is no exception to the benefits of a high positivity ratio. Yet given the global recession—a time of negative outlooks, uncertainty, and unwanted change—many business people may be experiencing ratios well below 1:1. Organizational leaders can use the fuel from negative emotions to ignite employees' impetus for change and meaningfully boost their organization's positivity ratio by both cultivating positive emotions and encouraging a positive emotional climate. Perhaps most importantly, positivity ratios do not need to be cast as just a final destination point or as a goal to achieve. Rather, the latest research suggests that they are a way to generate and fuel positive movement. Positive emotions associated with strength-based inquiry are expected to help motivate employees to develop new processes and practices that can continue to evolve.

CONCLUSION

Conceptualizing modern-day organizations and the work that people do for a living is next to impossible without considering the influence of emotions. This chapter has explained how this human element, found in every workplace, can be a powerful mechanism for positive change. The research prompted by positive psychologists and positive organizational scholars to date suggests that a focus on the mechanistic operations and one-time fixes to drive production is not enough to promote the systemic and dynamic processes needed for organizations in the 21st century. Instead, a climate characterized by positive emotions can create organizational change

by fostering organizational identification and relational strength, thereby spurring and sustaining a cycle of broaden-and-build effects. Finally, although this chapter highlights ecological sustainability as a current issue, it is just one of many applications for the next generation of researchers, practitioners, leaders, and employees to consider in exploring the benefits of experiencing positive emotions.

NOTES

1. Strength in this chapter generally refers to positive strong points of the organization, its members, and constituent stakeholders. As such, strength-based inquiry is a change process to promote discovery in the positive things that the organization, employees, and affiliates do well. This is different from culture strength per se, which is more about how strong the organization's policies and practices are (e.g., recognized and consistent), which enables work to be accomplished. Although strength is used slightly differently within each of these terminologies (i.e., strength-based inquiry versus culture strength), it is possible to conceptualize a synthesis of the two to arrive at *strength-based culture*, which is a culture that cocreates and supports practices and policies based on the positive things (e.g., assets and capacities) an organization and its constituents do well. The details of a strength-based culture are not discussed in this chapter; that said, broadly speaking, it can be argued that strength-based inquiry ultimately cultivates a positive strength-based culture.

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