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Job Search: From Setting the Goal to Obtaining the Job

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Job Search: From Setting the Goal to Obtaining the Job

by

Nicholas Aaron Moon

A thesis submitted to the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts of
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Abstract

Job Search: From Setting the Goal to Obtaining the Job

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Job searching is a nearly universal experience with important consequences. Although research on the job search process is extensive, few studies have examined the goals that individuals have during their job search (i.e., employment and job search goals) and the factors that influence these goals over time. However, these goal-related processes are likely to be key in this area given that job searching fundamentally involves goal pursuit and how these processes unfold may have important implications for job seekers. This research begins to fill this gap by examining self-efficacy as an antecedent of job search and employment goals; perceived progress as an antecedent of self-efficacy; locus of control, conscientiousness, and personal job demands as moderators of these relationships; and reemployment speed as a consequence. More specifically, this research involved two studies with job seekers in the healthcare field. In Study 1, participants reported and rank ordered specific job search and employment goals. In Study 2, participants reported perceived progress in job search, job search self-efficacy, employment self-efficacy, job search goals, and employment goals throughout the job search process over the course of three weeks. Findings (a) identified several common job search and employment goals in this context, (b) supported self-efficacy as a predictor of job search goals but not employment goals, (c) supported perceived progress as a predictor of both job search self-efficacy and employment self-efficacy, (d) indicated locus of control moderated the relationship between perceived progress and employment self-efficacy, and (e) did not support goal level as a predictor of reemployment speed. These findings provide new insights regarding the process of job searching and may provide a foundation for future research on goal-related processes in this context.

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Introduction

To some extent, almost every individual above working age has engaged in job searching behavior, whether as a high school student, recent college graduate, unhappy incumbent, or recently laid off employee. Because it is an important task with serious consequences (i.e., whether the individual works or not), job searching should be taken into consideration by individuals, organizations, and society more generally. Organizations, for example, should be interested in this because they look to attract the best employees for each available position. This is also an important process for practitioners who help individuals look for a job or career (e.g., employment counselors, vocational specialists). Most importantly, individuals should be interested in job search behavior given that jobs serve an important economic purpose and understanding more about this process may be beneficial in terms of obtaining jobs (e.g., learning how to increase the efficiency of job search behaviors).

There have been several studies on job searching behavior, with many of these studies taking a self-regulation approach (e.g., Liu, Wang, Liao, & Shi, 2014; Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001; Saks et al., 2006; Wanberg et al., 2005; Wanberg, Zhu, & Hooft, 2010). This research has been interesting and informative, producing important insights regarding the nature of job searching and its implications. However, one issue that has been addressed within self-regulation theory and research but has remained untapped in research on job searching behavior is the notion of changing goals over time. For example, if a job seeker aims to send out 20 resumes per week, but starts to obtain interviews, he or she may lower this initial goal down to 10 resumes per week. Although this type of goal regulation over time may be a common and consequential aspect of job searching, very little research has examined this issue. Thus, the purpose of this research is to examine this issue by developing and examining a model of job search goal regulation over time.

More specifically, this study is designed to contribute to research on job searching in four ways. First, the vast majority of previous research has examined job search behaviors (e.g., job search intensity, job search strategy; Taggar & Kuron, 2016; Turban et al., 2013) rather than goals. A few studies have examined job search goals through measuring job search intentions; however, this research examined only how hard the individual intended to search for a job through the process (Wanberg et al., 2005; Yizhong et al., 2017) or amount of time invested in job seeking (Van Hooft et al., 2005) rather than actual goal levels. Other researchers have examined job search goals through intentions by adapting a measure of job search behavior to indicate the intentions to perform activities (Fort, Pacaud, & Gilles, 2015; van Hooft et al., 2004; Zivic & Saks, 2009). However, few articles have involved a focused examination of employment goals within the job search process (for one exception see Fort et al.'s [2011] qualitative study of employment goal

precision). Despite this limited research on goals, most researchers agree that job searching is a self-regulated process (Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001). Based on this, it is likely that the job seeker sets goals based on his or her desire to obtain employment. These goals are likely to be a driving force behind the actual behavior of the individual, but little research has examined the specific goals individuals pursue during the job search process. Specifically, there are likely to be two types of goals that individuals have while searching for a job: job search process goals and employment goals. Job search process goals refer to goals that focus on the behaviors involved in job searching (e.g., send out 10 resumes per week), whereas employment goals refer to goals that focus on the characteristics of the job (e.g., salary of \$60,000). Prior research on job search behavior has focused on job search behaviors rather than the goals that the individual has for those behaviors. Thus, these two types of goals were examined in this research.

Second, self-regulation theory and research (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 2000; Locke & Latham, 1990; Vancouver & Day, 2005) also indicates that goal regulation is an important aspect of self-regulation. That is, individuals not only set initial goals but also often adjust these goals over time. However, given that prior job searching research has not involved a focused examination of goals, this goal regulation process has not been investigated in this context. Two potentially important factors in the goal regulation process are self-efficacy and perceived progress. Self-efficacy involves belief in one's ability to perform a particular task, and research indicates it directly influences goal revision, such that an individual who has high self-efficacy is more likely to set higher goals (Bandura, 1991; Tolli & Schmidt, 2008). When applied to job search behavior, the focus has been on job search self-efficacy (e.g., Fort et al., 2011; Taggar & Kuron, 2016); however, recently this was expanded to include employment self-efficacy as well (Liu et al., 2014). These two types of self-efficacy may have different implications for the regulation of goals within the job search process. For example, an individual with high job search self-efficacy would likely have higher job search process goals (e.g., higher number of applications). However, an individual with high employment self-efficacy may have higher employment goals (e.g., higher salary). Perceived progress involves an individual assessing the progress he or she makes towards a goal by comparing the current state to the goal. Previous research suggests that perceived progress may have implications for self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014; Wanberg et al., 2010) and affect (Wanberg et al., 2010). In combination, this suggests that both job search process goals and employment goals will vary over time based on fluctuations in self-efficacy which in turn may stem from shifts in perceived progress. These changes are important to understand as this can help explain aspects of the labor market (e.g., individual determines that his or her employment goal is unfeasible, so he or she stops searching for a job). Based on this, a goal regulation framework of job search is proposed (see Figure 1), which will help expand the literature on job search processes as well as the literature on goal regulation by extending this work to this previously neglected context.

Third, this work also proposes individual difference variables (i.e., conscientiousness and locus of control) as potential moderators of this goal regulation process. Prior research has found that conscientiousness (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991; Lanaj, Chang, & Johnson, 2012) and locus of control (e.g., Ballis, Segall, & Chipperfield, 2010; Converse et al., 2009) can affect goal regulation. However, these individual

difference variables have not been explored within goal regulation in the job search process; therefore, this research expands the literature in this area. It is likely that these individual differences will apply to the regulation of job search goals in a manner similar to that found in previous research. For example, individuals with a higher internal locus of control may be more likely to regulate goals upward based on their progress on those goals than those who have higher external locus of control. In addition, individuals with higher conscientiousness may be less likely to regulate goals based on their self-efficacy than those who have lower conscientiousness.

Finally, theoretical work (Wanberg et al., 2012) has also highlighted the role of external influences on the job search process but the effect of these factors on goal regulation has not been examined. Thus, this study also considers one of the job search demands—the personal context (Wanberg et al., 2012)—by proposing external influences (e.g., spouse or family member) as a moderator of this goal regulation process. This layer is the most proximal layer to the individual in job search demands, such that individuals experience financial worries and strains on the family throughout the job search process (Wanberg et al., 2012). This research seeks to expand this previous research on personal context job search demands by empirically examining the role of these demands in the goal regulation process. For example, if an individual experiences high amounts of personal context demands (e.g., spouse is upset that he or she does not have a job), then the individual may regulate his or her goals based on this feedback.

Given this, this research proposes a goal regulation framework for job search behavior. First, self-regulation will be introduced as the main theoretical framework for understanding job search behaviors. Second, job search behavior will be defined, including goal types and self-efficacy types. Third, goal regulation will be defined in greater detail by drawing parallels with previous research and applications to job search behavior. Fourth, individual differences including conscientiousness and locus of control will be examined as potential moderators in this goal-regulation process. Finally, personal job search demands will also be examined as a potential moderator in this goal regulation process.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is defined as “processes involved in attaining and maintaining (i.e., keeping regular) goals, where goals are internally represented (i.e., within the self) desired states” (Vancouver & Day, 2005, p. 158). Baumeister and Heatherton (1996) argue self-regulation can be broken down into three factors: standards, monitoring, and operating. Standards refers to the ideals and goals an individual has. Monitoring refers to the comparison of actual behaviors and state of the self to the standards expected. Operating refers to the response to the discrepancy between the actual state and the desired state. Thus, self-regulation is generally seen as a controlled dynamic process in which individuals regulate their behavior in the face of external factors that may influence their current state. This entails a feedback loop in which individuals can see the outcomes of their behavior and regulate their responses if the outcomes are undesirable. Numerous constructs and theories related to self-regulation have been proposed. This research draws primarily from two theories: control theory and social cognitive theory. These theories have their own interpretations of the process of self-regulation, but both theories have been accepted within self-regulation literature, and both can play a role in understanding job search goals and employment goals over time.

Control Theory

One of the major contributing theories, control theory, focuses on the three factors described by Baumeister and Heatherton (1996), such that individuals attempt to reduce this discrepancy between current and end state (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Jex & Britt, 2008). Drawing from control theory, these discrepancies have been described as goal-performance discrepancies (GPDs; e.g., Converse et al., 2009). The control system operates with these three mechanisms to regulate behavior. The system’s main function is to reduce discrepancies and move towards a desired state, which can be described as the goal level (Vancouver, 2000). In simple terms, this control system can be thought of as similar to a thermostat. The thermostat has a goal level (e.g., 74 degrees), so it will measure the environmental temperature and determine if there is a discrepancy between the current environment and the goal level and will adjust accordingly (e.g., turn on air conditioning to reduce the temperature in the room; Vancouver et al., 2001). Control theory thus consists of this negative feedback loop, which can cause individuals to increase effort in order to decrease the discrepancy between the current state and desired state (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Klein, 1989). One of the other major aspects of control theory is the hierarchical nature of goals. This idea indicates that, within individuals, goals are organized hierarchically such that long-term abstract goals are found higher in the hierarchy and involve the purpose of actions and short-term specific goals are found lower in the hierarchy and involve how the higher-level goals are achieved (Diefendorff & Lord, 2008). For example, in the case of job search behavior, the job search goals would be the lower-level specific goals (e.g., apply to 10 jobs this week) and the higher-level abstract

goals would be the employment goals (e.g., obtain a job that allows providing for one's family).

Control theory allows for several insights regarding job searching behavior. However, this approach has also received some criticism (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Bandura & Locke, 2003). One of the criticisms of this theory is that it is too mechanistic and focuses largely on reducing current state-desired state discrepancies rather than explanations behind the current state or the desired state. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory may be a useful addition to control theory in terms of supporting further development of our understanding of the job search process.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory contains several interrelated components. Perhaps the most important element of Bandura's social cognitive theory is self-efficacy. Basically, self-efficacy refers to the belief that an individual has the ability to perform a task related to a goal. Self-efficacy is a central component of social cognitive theory, such that it helps determine what tasks to pursue, how long to pursue those tasks even when faced with failure, and if the failures faced are motivating or not (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy can be influenced in several ways, such as through mastery experiences, modeling, social persuasion, and physiological states (Wood & Bandura, 1989). In many cases, enhancing self-efficacy may be beneficial for individuals as well as for organizations, as several positive implications for the workplace have been demonstrated. For example, those who are high in self-efficacy pursue higher goals because they believe they will be able to succeed (Bandura, 1986; Philips & Gully, 1997; Tolli & Schmidt, 2008; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). In addition, manager self-efficacy has been found to influence goal setting, analytic thinking, and organizational attainments (Wood & Bandura, 1989). However, as discussed in more detail later, within-person approaches to analyzing self-efficacy have indicated that high self-efficacy can be negatively associated with subsequent performance (Vancouver, Thompson, & Williams, 2001).

In addition, Bandura argues that there are two different control systems that influence goal-directed behavior. The first system involves discrepancy production processes, where a positive discrepancy between the current state and desired end state is created, whereas the second involves discrepancy reduction processes, where steps are taken to reduce an existing discrepancy between the current state and desired end state (Bandura, 2001). First, individuals motivate themselves by setting a goal. However, after achieving this goal, individuals may set higher goals (producing a discrepancy) in order to motivate themselves to produce more. Afterwards, individuals will try to reduce this discrepancy between the current state and the new higher goal. Thus, the social cognitive theory perspective emphasizes that individuals will revise their goals upward over their last performance, whereas control theory seems to focus more on reducing goal-performance discrepancies.

Given these descriptions, it is clear why self-regulation is often applied to job search behavior. For instance, unemployed individuals (or those looking for a new position) want to reduce the discrepancy between their current state (unemployed or

unhappy in current position) and their desired end state (a new position). Thus, the job searching can be seen as a self-regulatory process unfolding over time.

Perceived Progress

Applying this concept of goal-performance discrepancy, one way to assess this has been with perceived progress. Perceived goal progress refers to the comparison of current performance with the desired performance of individuals (Carver, 2004). This has been previously applied in self-regulation (Bandura, 1991; Bandura & Locke, 2003); however, limited research has been conducted within job search behavior. Wanberg, Zhu, and Hooft (2010) found perceived progress was positively related to positive affect, negatively related to negative affect, and positively related to reemployment efficacy, indicating that if individuals perceived higher progress on their job search, they had higher levels of positive affect or if they perceived lower progress on their job search, they had higher levels of negative affect across time. In addition, those who had higher levels of perceived progress had higher levels of reemployment efficacy, which represented the confidence the individual would find an acceptable job. While this study is foundational on the process in the job search behavior literature, it does not examine the relationship with this perceived progress and further goal setting. According to a control theory perspective, individuals who perceive higher progress (i.e., the job search process is going well) may revise their goals downward due to being closer to the desired state (Austin & Vancouver, 1996; Campion & Lord, 1982; Williams, Donovan, & Dodge, 2000). From a social cognitive theory perspective, individuals who perceive higher progress revise their goals upward and lower progress revise their goals downward (Ilies & Judge, 2005). These discrepancies may be explained by further separating these goals into job search and employment goals, which will be discussed in a later section.

Goal Regulation

Goal regulation refers to the downward or upward adjustment of goals over time by alternating between “cycles of discrepancy production and discrepancy reduction” (Donovan & Williams, 2003, p. 380). Discrepancy production refers to “the process by which individuals set goals above previous levels of performance, creating a discrepancy between their current performance level and performance goal in an attempt to motivate themselves toward higher levels of performance,” (Donovan & Williams, 2003, p. 380). Discrepancy reduction refers to “the process by which individuals monitor GPD information and work toward reducing discrepancy through a variety of mechanisms to achieve a positive self-evaluation” (Donovan & Williams, 2003, p. 380). In both cases, one adjusts goals either upward or downward based on trying to reduce a discrepancy or produce a discrepancy in order to increase motivation. For example, if an individual has a goal to create 10 items on an assembly line, a discrepancy production would be changing the goal to create 15 items on the assembly line, in order to motivate the individual to produce more. In contrast, a discrepancy reduction would be when an individual has a goal of 15 items, but only creates 10 items; therefore, the individual lowers his or her goal to 10 in subsequent trials in order to meet his or her goal more often. In both cases, the

individual will adjust a goal based on the previous performance and the perceived GPD. As discussed in more detail later, this model of goal regulation (Donovan & Williams, 2003), may have several implications for goal pursuit during job searching involving proximal goals (i.e., job search goals) and distal goals (i.e., employment goals). However, previous research on goal setting within job search behavior has been limited and has focused on a goal-orientation perspective (e.g., Ali, Ryan, Lyons, Ehrhart, & Wessel, 2016; Creed, King, Hood, & McKenzie, 2009; Noordzij, van Hooft, van Mierlo, van Dam, & Born, 2013). No previous studies have examined the regulation of goals within job search over time.

Job Search

Kanfer, Wanberg, and Kantrowitz (2001) define job search behavior as a “purposive, volitional pattern of action that begins with the identification and commitment to pursuing an employment goal” (p. 838). Basically, these researchers define job search behavior as goal-directed actions focusing on employment. Kanfer et al. (2001) thus establish job search behavior as a self-regulatory process where individuals may change in search intensity and direction as they receive feedback or have cognitive and emotional appraisals of their current progress in the job search process. Based on this self-regulation model, there are four different dimensions that are defined: intention to search, job search clarity, job search methods, and job search strategy. Intention to search refers to the decision of the individual to search for a new position (Wanberg et al., 2005). Job search clarity refers to “having a clear idea of the type of career, work, or job desired” (Wanberg et al., 2002, p. 1104). Job search methods refer to the method used to obtain the position, either passive or active (e.g., networking, gathering information, and applying for positions; Van Hove & Saks, 2008). Job search strategy refers to the type of strategy used, such as haphazard, exploratory, and focused strategy (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005). These dimensions relate to *intensity-effort* (i.e., time spent on job search), *content-direction* (i.e., methods and quality of search), and *temporal-persistence* (i.e., changes over time in and continuation of effort). From these four dimensions, job search self-efficacy and job search intensity emerged as important constructs within job search literature, whereas research on temporal-persistence has been neglected (Wanberg, Kanfer, Hamann, & Zhang, 2016).

In general, most of the research in this area has been focused on job search behavior within this process. For example, a number of studies have examined *job search intensity*, which refers to time or effort that individuals spend on the job search process (Wanberg, Kanfer, & Rotundo, 1999; Wanberg, Zhu, Kanfer, & Zhang, 2012). However, there has been limited research on the process by which these behaviors are enacted through the setting of goals. The focus of the following sections will be describing two different types of goals: job search goals and employment goals.

Job Search Goals

Previous research on job search behavior has focused largely on the actual actions performed while in the job search process. Kanfer, Wanberg, and Kantrowitz (2001) define job search behavior as a “purposive, volitional pattern of action that begins with the identification and commitment to pursuing an employment goal” (p. 838). Most of the time, job search behavior is measured through intensity, which refers to objective measures of job search behaviors (e.g., submitting resumes, attaining interviews, filling out job applications, and preparing resume; Blau, 1994; Fort, Jacquet, & Leroy, 2011; Yamkovenko & Hatala, 2014). Job search behaviors do have important implications for outcomes within the job search process. Job search behaviors have been linked to reemployment status (Kanfer et al., 2001). In addition, job search intensity was positively

related to the number of interviews per week (Wanberg et al., 2012). In contrast, previous research has been limited on the goals that individuals set in job searching.

However, it is likely that individuals have goals related to these job search behaviors. A few studies have examined these goals in relation to job search intentions (Fort, Pacaud, & Gilles, 2015; van Hooft et al., 2004; Wanberg et al., 2005; Zivic & Saks, 2009). For example, Wanberg et al. (2005) focused exclusively on “how hard” the individual was going to try to find a job, and Fort, Pacaud, and Gilles (2015) examined job search intentions in terms of the intent to perform job search activities. Based on these studies, this research examines job search process goals that are set during the job search process. Job search goals refer to the goals that individuals set for the preparatory and active job search behaviors exhibited during the job search process. For example, as a job seeker, I may be interested in applying to 10 jobs per week that I feel are adequate for me. This constitutes a job search goal as it involves a standard related to job search behavior. Other goals I set as a job seeker could include: revising a resume, contacting potential employers, having a job interview, searching the internet or newspaper for job postings, posting a resume on a job board website, and asking for a referral from colleagues or friends. Previous research on job search intentions has adapted measures of job search behaviors with modified instructions in order to capture these intentions (Fort, Pacaud, & Gilles, 2015; van Hooft et al., 2004; Zivic & Saks, 2009). Based on Control Theory, these job search goals may reflect lower level goals in the goal hierarchy in which they are a means to the end goal (i.e., employment goal). From this perspective, the underlying process of job search involves these desired states (i.e., goals) and related behavior.

Based on this, this research proposes that job seekers set and strive toward job search process goals. However, previous research does not provide clear guidance on the most prominent goals that individuals may pursue during job search. Therefore, this study expands this research area by exploring which job search goals job seekers identify as the most important. More specifically, job seekers (a) responded to an open-ended question regarding their job search goals and (b) rank ordered behaviors from an existing job search behavior scale (Blau, 1994) based on perceived importance to determine the top five goals associated with job search behavior. These top goals were then examined in more detail (as discussed in the Method section).

Research Question 1: What are the top five job search goals that individuals set while pursuing employment?

Employment Goals

Employment goals are goals targeted towards obtaining employment and the characteristics of an individual’s ideal job. For example, obtaining a job within 30 minutes of home or obtaining a job with a starting salary of \$40,000 are employment goals. Employment goals are expected to focus on several job characteristics, which also may be competing with one another. For example, employment goals might involve: commute time (i.e., location), time expected to stay in position, number of hours per week, salary, various work conditions, person-organization fit, and job complexity. Addressing a call for additional primary research on job search and outcomes other than reemployment status

and speed, this research seeks to expand this literature by exploring desired job characteristics of job seekers (Wanberg, Kanfer, Hamann, & Zhang, 2016).

Previous research on employment goals within job search literature has been scarce. However, Fort et al. (2011) examined one aspect of employment goals: goal precision. The researchers provided a qualitative analysis of the employment goals that individuals have by content coding the specificity of these goals. This leaves room for improvement in understanding the employment goals of job seekers. However, research in the job choice literature has outlined several factors that lead to a job-choice decision. In fact, Boswell et al. (2003) outlined several different factors that are important to a job-choice decision, including (listed from highest importance to lowest importance): company culture, advancement opportunities, nature of work, training provided, work/non-work balance, monetary compensation, benefits, location, vacation time, levels of job security, size of company, international assignments, reputation of the company, and industry. In addition, Judge and Bretz (1992) also found that organizations' cultural factors are more likely to provide individuals with help in making a choice between companies and are an important determinant of person-organization fit. In fact, meta-analytic estimates put these job characteristics as number one in determining whether an individual accepts a position, compared to recruiter behaviors, hiring expectations, and perceived alternatives (Uggerslev et al., 2012). In addition, Judge and Bretz (1992) found that work values influence job choice decisions, such that achievement, concern for others, fairness in dealing with others, and honesty are most important. These factors can be separated into two types of features: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic job features would be features that are based on internal desires (e.g., intrinsic interest in the job itself, opportunity for advancement, and personal feelings about the job), whereas extrinsic job features are based on external constraints to choose a job (e.g., family or financial requirements, location of the job, and salary provided; O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1980). However, these features have been examined in context of the choice of accepting or rejecting a job offer rather than in context of the goals individuals set regarding these features. The previous research thus neglects the motivational factors that impact these decisions being made by focusing directly on the decision rather than the factors that lead to the decision (i.e., goals).

Building on this previous job choice research, the present study examined the goals individuals have while pursuing employment. Specifically, job seekers first qualitatively reported their employment goals. Then, based on job choice research (Boswell et al., 2003; Judge & Bretz, 1992), these individuals were provided with a list of potential employment goals and rank ordered these goals by importance. These two sets of responses was then used to determine the top five goals associated with employment. This lead to the following research question.

Research Question 2: What are the top five employment goals that individuals set while pursuing employment?

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Theoretical and empirical work suggests self-efficacy has important implications for goal-related behavior. For example, individuals with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to be persistent in efforts (Bandura, 1988). In addition, those with higher self-efficacy set higher goals and are committed to those goals across discrepancy conditions (Bandura & Cervone, 1986). Consistent with this finding, Tolli and Schmidt (2008) found that self-efficacy had a strong positive relationship with goal setting and changing in goals over time.

It is important to note; however, that there are differing views on the implications of self-efficacy for goal setting and behavior. On the one hand, Bandura has presented a largely positive view of high self-efficacy. For example, Bandura (1997) posits that self-efficacy positively affects motivation directly and also through goal selection. In addition, Bandura argues that high self-efficacy is essential for individuals to maintain effort and succeed (Bandura, 1997; Wood & Bandura, 1989). Self-efficacy has also been demonstrated as a significant predictor of performance, including contributing above and beyond other factors, such as past performance (Bandura, 1997). This suggests that self-efficacy has positive effects on motivation and performance.

On the other hand, other researchers have suggested higher self-efficacy may not always have positive consequences. For example, Vancouver (2005) argues that self-efficacy can be negatively related with subsequent performance. In particular, higher self-efficacy may cause complacent self-assurance undermining motivation, which adversely affects an individual’s performance (Vancouver et al., 2001). Consistent with this idea, Vancouver et al. (2001) found that within-person, self-efficacy was negatively related to subsequent performance, such that individuals with higher self-efficacy had lower subsequent performance on an analytical game. This suggests there is a negative relationship between self-efficacy and subsequent performance.

However, both Vancouver (2005) and Bandura (1997) would seem to agree that self-efficacy is positively related to goal level and persistence; therefore, self-efficacy should be positively related to goal setting. For example, Vancouver et al. (2001) found that there was a positive relationship between past performance, self-efficacy, and personal goal level within person, such that individuals with better past performance reported higher personal goals and higher self-efficacy. In addition, within person, Vancouver et al. (2001) found there was a positively relationship for self-efficacy on goals. Overall, this shows that advocates of Social Cognitive Theory and Control Theory would tend to agree that self-efficacy is positively related to goal level, a focal construct in this study. Therefore, despite the discrepancies between the two theories on the effects of self-efficacy on performance, self-efficacy is expected to be positively related to goal level.

Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy

Consistent with social cognitive theory, previous research on job search has linked self-efficacy to the job search process. Job search behavior self-efficacy refers to “an individual’s belief that he or she can successfully perform job-search behaviors” (Wanberg et al., 2005, p. 412). However, research on the effects of self-efficacy applied to job search behavior has had several inconsistencies. For instance, Fort et al. (2011) found that self-efficacy did not have a significant relationship with employment goal precision, but was still directly related to planning and job search behavior, suggesting that the clarity of the goal may not be as important in job search behavior as in other behaviors. They found that neither job search self-efficacy nor perceived behavioral control were related to the intensity of job search behavior within individuals. In addition, Wanberg et al. (2010) determined that, after controlling for perceived progress, the individual’s self-efficacy regarding employment was not related to subsequent job search behaviors. Furthermore, van Hooft et al. (2004) found that once job search attitude and subjective norms were included in an overall model, job search self-efficacy did not significantly predict job search intentions or behavior. In addition, Song et al., (2006) found that job search self-efficacy was not significantly related to job search intention, but job search self-efficacy was related to higher job search intensity. Conversely, Wanberg et al. (2005) found that job search behavior self-efficacy and job search intensity over the following two weeks were positively related, and this relationship was mediated by job search intentions. Furthermore, in a meta-analysis, Kanfer et al. (2001) found that self-efficacy significantly predicted job search behavior, which led to an increase in the number of job offers and obtaining employment.

In order to explain the inconsistency in findings on job search self-efficacy, recent research (Liu et al., 2014) has split job search self-efficacy into two dimensions: employment self-efficacy (i.e., self-efficacy regarding obtaining employment) and job search behavior self-efficacy (i.e., self-efficacy regarding performing job search behavior). This is consistent with the notion of a goal hierarchy within the job search process. Consistent with their hypotheses, Liu et al. (2014) found that employment self-efficacy was negatively related to job search behavior and job search behavior self-efficacy was positively related to job search behavior.

Although Liu et al. (2014) proposed this distinction within self-efficacy, it has yet to be explored with regards to the goals that individuals have (i.e., job search behavior goals and employment goals). However, as noted previously, theory and research suggest that self-efficacy should have implications for goals. Specifically, self-efficacy should be positively related to goal level, such that individuals with higher self-efficacy will have higher levels of goals. For example, if an individual has higher job search behavior self-efficacy, he or she will have higher goals for performing those behaviors (i.e., job search goals).

Hypothesis 1: Job search behavior self-efficacy will be positively related to job search goals within individuals over time.

Employment Self-Efficacy

Recently developed, employment self-efficacy refers to “beliefs regarding capabilities to attain an *accepted* end state, the magnitude of the discrepancy between which and the current state is often *ambiguous*” (Liu et al., 2014, p. 1162 [emphasis in original]). In this case, the accepted end state would be obtaining a desirable job, and this is ambiguous because an individual presumably does not know when he or she will obtain a job. The attainment of employment is often impacted by many different factors, such as the economy, the organization, and other job seekers; therefore, it is difficult for an individual job seeker to anticipate the attainment of a position. The basis of developing this type of self-efficacy relies on the hierarchical structure of goals within job search behavior. Liu et al. (2014) describe hierarchically structured goals for job search behavior: the employment goal (i.e., ends) and the job search behavior goal (i.e., means). However, Liu et al. (2014) did not examine actual goal levels within this goal hierarchy; instead, the authors focused on the differing types of self-efficacy.

Based on the conceptual and empirical considerations discussed above, it is expected that employment self-efficacy has implications for employment goals, such that higher self-efficacy is associated with higher goals.

Hypothesis 2: Employment self-efficacy will be positively related to employment goals within individuals over time.

Perceived Progress

Perceived progress is a measure of goal progress, such that individuals assess search progress by comparing current performance with desired performance (Wanberg, Zhu, & van Hooft, 2010). Individuals will vary on this, such that individuals will evaluate their progress on a good to poor continuum based on their standards (Bandura, 1991; Wanberg, Zhu & van Hooft, 2010). Based on social cognitive theory, perceived progress should have implications for self-efficacy. In particular, individuals who have lower progress will be more likely to assess themselves as unable to meet their goals, and thus will have lower self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1997). The potential implications of perceived progress for self-efficacy may also be seen from a control theory perspective. From this view, individuals who perceive lower progress have higher levels of GPD. Higher GPDs may then lead to lower self-efficacy, as larger distances from one's goals are likely associated with lower capability-related beliefs. In addition, previous research has found that perceived progress is positively related to reemployment efficacy (Wanberg et al., 2010), job search self-efficacy, and employment self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014). Based on these arguments and previous research, it is expected that perceived progress has implications for job search and employment self-efficacy, such that better perceived progress is associated with higher self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived progress will be positively related to (a) job search self-efficacy and (b) employment self-efficacy within individuals over time.

In order to understand the extent to which these relationships may vary among individuals, the following sections will focus on potential moderators in these hypothesized relationships. Based on previous goal-setting research, conscientiousness, locus of control, and personal job demands will be examined as potential moderators.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness refers to “dependability; that is, being careful, thorough, responsible, organized, and planful” (Barrick & Mount, 1991, p. 4). Six facets have been identified as being classified under conscientiousness: industriousness, order, self-control, responsibility, traditionalism, and virtue (Roberts et al., 2005). Individuals who score highly on industriousness are “hard working, ambitious, confident, and resourceful” (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 119). Individuals who score highly on order are planners and are organized. Individuals who score highly on self-control tend to “be cautious, levelheaded, able to delay gratification, and be patient” (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 122). Individuals who score highly on responsibility “like to be of service to others, frequently contribute their time and money to community projects, and tend to be cooperative and dependable” (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 122). Individuals who score highly on traditionalism “comply with current rules, customs, norms, and expectations” (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 122). Finally, individuals who score highly on virtue “act in accordance with accepted rules of good or moral behavior, and strive to be a moral exemplar” (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 122). DeYoung, Quilty, and Peterson (2007) took this a step further and identified two different aspects—industriousness and orderliness—and argued that the remaining factors Roberts et al. (2005) outline are compound traits rather than single conscientiousness facets. Based on these aspects, DeYoung et al. (2007) developed a 20-item scale for conscientiousness under the Big Five Aspect Scale (BFAS).

Research has demonstrated that conscientiousness is an influential trait in work-related settings. For instance, conscientiousness is one of the best personality predictors of job performance (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). In addition, conscientiousness has a moderately positive relationship with leader emergence, leadership effectiveness, and overall leadership (Judge et al., 2002). Conscientiousness has also been shown to be positively related with job satisfaction, distributive justice, interactive justice, altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue (Moorman, 1991). More directly relevant to the current research, this trait has also been linked specifically to goals and goal-related processes. For example, conscientiousness has been found to predict goals related to intrinsic career success and extrinsic career success above and beyond cognitive ability, such that those higher in conscientiousness set higher goals than those lower in conscientiousness (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999). In addition, conscientiousness has been shown to predict goal setting, organizing, and executing (Bartram, 2005; Judge & Ilies, 2002). Conscientiousness is also related to goals and goal striving based on the definition and the facets within conscientiousness. For example, conscientiousness contains orderliness, deliberation, self-discipline, and achievement striving. Each of these has to do with setting and obtaining goals. These facets can help explain why conscientiousness has been found to be important in goal setting, organizing, and executing. Those who are high in conscientiousness (i.e., high in these facets) will often set higher goals and may persist more in pursuing goals. It is also important to note that, although these studies demonstrate that conscientiousness is overall an important predictor for a variety of criteria, conscientiousness is also considered a moderator in many

contexts. For instance, conscientiousness was found to moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and CWBs, where the relationship between job satisfaction and CWB was stronger for those lower in conscientiousness (Bowling, 2010).

Conscientiousness may also play a moderating role in the context of goal setting by affecting the relationship between self-efficacy and goals. In particular, the relationship between self-efficacy and goals may be weaker for those higher in conscientiousness. For example, individuals who are higher on conscientiousness tend to be more dependable and responsible. These qualities may mean that these individuals are less likely to give up on a plan even if they are experiencing lower levels of self-efficacy. Similarly, given that individuals high in conscientiousness are often more ambitious, these individuals should continue to have higher goals and may not lower goals even in the face of low self-efficacy. In contrast, those lower in conscientiousness, who are less dependable, responsible, and ambitious, may be more inclined to regulate their goals based on their current self-efficacy level given that they feel less compelled to stick to a plan and achieve higher outcomes. Previous research has found that individuals who are high in conscientiousness and have lower self-efficacy respond with more effort, whereas individuals who are low in conscientiousness need higher self-efficacy in order to stay focused and exert more effort (Sun, Chen, & Song, 2016). Furthermore, conscientiousness moderates GPD and effort relationships, such that those high in conscientiousness will engage in more effort than those low in conscientiousness when experiencing a negative GPD (i.e., they are below their goal; Converse et al., 2009). Conscientious individuals are also likely to set higher goals; therefore, it is likely that those who are high in conscientiousness will not give up on goals even when perceived progress or self-efficacy is lower. Given these considerations, it is expected that conscientiousness moderates the relationships between self-efficacy and goals.

Hypothesis 4: Conscientiousness will moderate (a) the relationship between employment self-efficacy and employment goals and (b) the relationship between job search self-efficacy and job search goals, such that those with higher levels of conscientiousness will have weaker relationships.

Locus of Control

Locus of control refers to “a person’s beliefs about control over life events” (Findley & Cooper, 1983, p. 419). Locus of control is a continuum with external and internal being on opposite sides of the same spectrum. External locus of control refers to individuals who “feel that their outcomes are determined by forces beyond their control” (e.g., luck or other individuals; Findley & Cooper, 1983, p. 419). Internal locus of control refers to individuals who “feel personally responsible for things that happen to them” (Findley & Cooper, 1983, p. 419). However, most individuals are likely to fall somewhere between these two extremes.

Locus of control has been demonstrated to have several implications in the workplace. For example, those who have higher internal locus of control tend to have higher job satisfaction, job performance, mental well-being, life satisfaction, physical health, organizational commitment, intrinsic task motivation, self-efficacy, and academic achievement (Findley & Cooper, 1983; Judge et al., 2001; Ng et al., 2006). Locus of control has also been linked specifically with self-regulatory processes. In goal setting, for example, those who are higher in internal locus of control set more difficult goals and have a stronger need for achievement (Yukl & Latham, 1978). In addition, internals (i.e., those high in internal locus of control) should display higher motivation than externals due to the fact that they believe they have more control over the environment and the effort they expend will be successful (Spector, 1982). Based on self-regulation theory previously discussed, locus of control may influence the negative feedback loop, which involves the individual assessing the discrepancy between his or her current state and desired goal. For example, individuals who assess this discrepancy as being a product of their own efforts (i.e., high internal locus of control) may feel as if they are in control of reducing the discrepancy. In contrast, individuals who believe this discrepancy is due to external factors (i.e., high external locus of control) may feel as if they are not in control of reducing the discrepancy. When applied to job search behavior, van Hooft and Crossley (2008) found that job search locus of control was not able to predict unique variance over demographic variables; however, their research was limited in the amount of data collected. In addition, van Hooft and Crossley (2008) examined locus of control as a predictor of job search behavior, rather than a factor influencing the relationship between progress and goals.

Despite the extensive amount of research on locus of control within organizational settings, further research is needed to determine the importance of locus of control within job search behavior. This research proposes that locus of control may play a role in the relationship between perceived progress and self-efficacy. Locus of control can impact the relationship between perceived progress and self-efficacy because the perception of progress may or may not be attributed to the work of the individual. For example, if an individual has a high external locus of control, perceptions of progress may be attributed to the market rather than his or her own behavior. As a result, those high in external locus of control may not adapt to perceptions of success or failure due to the attribution to other factors. In contrast, if an individual has a high internal locus of control, he or she may perceive the progress as being attributed to his or her behavior and therefore may be more

likely to adjust self-efficacy accordingly. Previous research has examined a related construct: internal attribution. Liu et al. (2014) found that when job seekers made internal attributions regarding progress, the relationships between job search progress and employment and job search self-efficacy were stronger. Previous research has also suggested that the relationship between GPDs and goals is moderated by locus of control, such that individuals with higher internal locus of control demonstrate stronger GPD-goal relationships (Converse et al., 2009). Therefore, the relationship between perceived progress and self-efficacy is expected to be moderated by locus of control, such that those higher in internal locus of control will have a stronger relationship between perceived progress and self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 5: Locus of control will moderate (a) the relationship between perceived progress and employment self-efficacy and (b) the relationship between perceived progress and job search self-efficacy, such that those with higher internal locus of control will have stronger relationships.

Personal Job Search Demands

In addition to these internal personal characteristics, previous theoretical work suggests external demands may also influence job seeker goal regulation. Wanberg et al. (2012) have argued that there are several different job search demands that can influence the individual job seeker: omnibus, organizational, social, task, and personal. In general, job search demands involve “aspects of the situation that job seekers see as variously challenging, difficult, demanding, frustrating, discouraging, or that require adaptational responses in order to navigate the needs of the search process” (Wanberg et al., 2012, p. 892). Omnibus demands involve the economic conditions and the employee’s current employment situation. Organizational demands include the insistence on a perfect match between employee and employer, lack of professionalism, competence, efficiency, vague/dated advertising, and demographic discrimination. Social demands involve one’s social network, such as friends, colleagues, and other personal contacts, such that the individual may have a network that is too small or unable to help or the individual has difficulty expanding his or her network. Task demands include depersonalization, uncertainty, repeated rejection, and monotony. Personal demands involve the impact on the family and finances and job decisions.

Each of these demands has been theoretically proposed to impact the job search process. However, this research focuses on the most proximal layer of the external context: personal demands. Personal demands refer to the “difficulties regarding family relationships, personal finances, and decision making” (Wanberg et al., 2012, p. 909). There are two categories within personal demands: (a) impact on the family and finances and (b) job decisions. Impact on the family and finances refers to “financial worries and strain on the family stemming from the job search” (Wanberg et al., 2012, p. 909). For example, Wanberg et al. (2012) report a quote taken from an interview of a job seeker: “It’s just a real challenge because of the financial pressure with my wife and other obligations so it’s very stressful. At some point in the not-so-distant future it’s going to force some very fundamental life-changing kinds of decisions. So that’s unpleasant, to say the very kindest about it” (p. 909). This quote exemplifies how decisions made during the job search process can be influenced by family and/or relationships within individuals’ lives. Job decisions refer to “being faced with multiple important decisions during the job search process” (Wanberg et al., 2012, p. 901). For example, Wanberg et al. (2012) report on a 54-year-old underemployed job seeker who indicated that his wife worked and that if he took another job somewhere else, it would not make sense for the family due to his wife becoming unemployed. This shows how being faced with a decision to take a job adds a lot of demands to the job seeker that may impact his or her decision to pursue or accept a position.

In this research, I focused on these personal job search demands specifically in terms of the extent to which job seekers experience these demands through family and financial obligations. In essence, this study examined the perception of how much these personal job search demands exist for each participant (e.g., perceiving a lot of pressure from family obligations). Previous research has examined job search difficulties; however,

this research relied on the job seeker's perception of whether his or her job search has been difficult, rather than examining these specific personal job search demands (Kreemers, van Hooft, & van Vianen, 2018). Based on previous theoretical work (Wanberg et al., 2010), it is expected that these personal job search demands will impact the relationship between self-efficacy and goals, such that this relationship will be weaker when personal job search demands are higher. In the first example, the job seeker may have a higher amount of personal job search demands (e.g., his wife), which may weaken the relationship between his self-efficacy and goals. For example, based on the previous sections, a job seeker with high self-efficacy would set a higher goal (e.g., salary). In this regard, if the individual has concrete financial obligations (e.g., a family), his or her efficacy may be less important, such that the relationship would be weaker and the goals may vary less over time because he would have a financial obligation (i.e., need a certain salary level) in order to provide for his or her family. In the second example, the individual will have constraints on the amount and type of jobs that he could pursue due to being constrained to a specific area (i.e., the individual cannot move for a job because his spouse would have to quit her job). In this case, his self-efficacy level is less relevant to the goals because his goals are constrained by external factors. In the present study, the focus will be on family and finance related constraints placed on a job seeker during the job search process.

Hypothesis 6: Perceptions of personal job search demands (in terms of family and financial obligations) will moderate (a) the relationship between job search self-efficacy and job search goals and (b) the relationship between employment self-efficacy and employment goals, such that those with higher job search demands will have weaker relationships.

Reemployment Speed

In order to understand the impact of goals on desired outcomes, this section focuses on the consequences of goal setting in the job search process (i.e., obtaining employment and speed of obtaining employment). Employment status refers to “whether or not an individual reports having obtained employment by the end of some specified period” (Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001, p. 842). Reemployment speed refers to how quickly individuals become reemployed. Reemployment speed has been operationalized as -1 times the amount of time before a new job was found, where higher negative scores indicate a longer period of time before obtaining employment. For example, previous research has examined how job search behavior has impacted the speed at which an individual attains reemployment (e.g., Wanberg, Kanfer, & Banas, 2000; Wanberg et al., 2005; Wanberg et al., 2016).

The speed at which an individual obtains reemployment is likely to depend on several variables, such as job search intensity (Wanberg et al., 2005; Wanberg et al., 2016), age (Wanberg et al., 2016), and job search self-efficacy (Wanberg et al., 2016). However, previous research has yet to examine the impact of goals on reemployment speed. Job search goals should be positively related to reemployment speed, such that individuals with higher job search goals should obtain employment more quickly (i.e., more difficult goals lead to higher performance; Locke & Latham, 1990). For example, an individual who has a goal to apply for 20 jobs per week should obtain employment more quickly than an individual who has a goal to apply for 5 jobs per week. In contrast, employment goals should be negatively related to reemployment speed, such that individuals with lower employment goals should obtain employment more quickly. For example, an individual who has a salary goal of \$30,000 per year should obtain employment more quickly than an individual who has a salary goal of \$100,000 per year, because there are more jobs at lower salary levels.

Hypothesis 7: Average employment goal level will be negatively related to reemployment speed.

Hypothesis 8: Average job search goal level will be positively related to reemployment speed.

Present Research

This research involved two studies. Study 1 addressed Research Questions 1 and 2. Current job seekers were surveyed regarding their job search and employment goals. This study asked a series of open ended questions (e.g., What job characteristics' goals do you have?; What are some goals that you have during your job search process?). After this, individuals were asked to rank order some pre-determined characteristics developed by the researcher based on the job choice literature and job design questionnaire (see Appendix C for the survey for Study 1). This study laid the foundation for the second study where individuals rated their goals quantitatively.

Study 2 addressed Hypotheses 1-8. A separate sample of job seekers first completed measures of conscientiousness, locus of control, personal job demands, and demographic variables. Then, they completed another survey three to four times per week (on average) over the course of three weeks. These individuals reported their perceived progress, goals, and job search/employment self-efficacy each time (see Appendix C for the survey for Study 2).

Study 1

Method

Participants. Participants were 18 job seekers within the healthcare industry (83.3% Female; 77.8% White; mean age: 38.82 [$SD = 13.27$]; mean years of work experience: 11.63 [$SD = 11.71$]). Participants were from multiple professions, including speech language pathologist (5.9%), registered nurse (16.7%), pharmacy technician (11.1%), pharmacist (27.8%), and other (33.3%). For example, other professions included behavioral analyst, social worker, and medical laboratory technician.

Procedure. The job seekers were solicited via e-mail to participate in the online survey. Job seeker information were obtained via a national staffing company's database and the company will be provided a report of the overall findings in this study. The job seekers were solicited until an adequate number of survey responses are obtained. Each individual received an invitation link to participate in a survey based on the Qualtrics platform. The individuals were first pre-screened to ensure that they are actively searching for a position. After completing the pre-screen questions, individuals were asked a series of open-ended questions regarding their job search. They were asked to rank-order given goals on a separate page. After completing the survey, each individual received an entry into a raffle drawing for one \$25 gift card. A winner was determined at random by using an Excel random number generator.

Measures. For Study 1, there were several questions designed to elicit the types of goals that individuals have while searching for a job. These were split between job search goals and employment goals.

Job search goals was measured using open-ended questions. Individuals were asked to report at least five job search goals and rank order them in importance. Then individuals reported if these goals have changed over the course of their job search process, and if so, why. Finally, the individuals rank ordered defined goals adapted from the Job Search Intensity scale (Wanberg et al., 2002). Sample items include: "Reading job postings on a job board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)," "Filling out a job application" and "Having a job interview with a prospective employer." Previously, this scale has been used to assess the behavior of job seekers, but for this study, we examined goals specifically. For a full list of items, please see Appendix C.

Employment goals was measured using open-ended questions. Individuals were asked to report at least five employment goals and rank order them in importance. Then individuals were asked to report if these goals have changed over the course of their job search process, and if so, why. Finally, the individuals rank ordered defined goals adapted from job choice and job design questionnaires. This included items from the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) and several items from recruitment predictors and applicant attraction (Uggerslev et al., 2012). Sample items

include: “Autonomy,” “Complexity in the job,” “Salary,” “Commuting time and distance,” and “Hours per week.” For a full list of items, please see Appendix C.

Personal Job Search Demands was measured using open ended questions. Individuals were asked about personal job search demands they experience in their job search process and to rank order them in importance. Similar to the other measures, individuals were also asked if these personal job search demands changed since they started their job search, if so, how. After completing this, individuals were asked to rank order some example personal job search demands. Sample items included: spouse, children, friends/colleagues, and parents. For a full list of items, please see Appendix C.

Analyses. Quantitative data from Study 1 was analyzed by determining an average rank across participants for each of the goal and demand items generated from previous research. A score was given to each of the items and the lowest five scores were determined to be the top five job search goals, employment goals, and personal job search demands. After analyzing the quantitative data, the qualitative data was analyzed as a secondary source of information to determine whether other goals or demands that were not included in the original items should be in the top five. In order for an item to displace a previously determined top five goal or demand, the goal had to be a unique item and have 80% of individuals reporting that this item was in the top five. After assessing the top employment and job search goals and personal demands, Study 2 quantitatively analyzed how these factors vary over time.

Results and Discussion

In order to examine Research Question 1, the average rank given to each job search goal across participants was calculated and sorted from lowest to highest (where the closest average rank to 1 is the top job search goal). Based on this, the top five goals were determined to be: Preparing/Revising your resume, Sending a resume to a prospective employer, Reading job postings on a job board (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn), Posting your resume/information on job board websites (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn), and Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry. Given that Study 2 is primarily interested in goal setting over time, these goals were also evaluated in terms of the extent to which they might vary over time. I determined that posting one’s resume/information on job board websites (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn) would likely not have a significant amount of variation across days; therefore, this goal was dropped from the list of top job search goals. Instead, Speaking with others about their knowledge of potential job leads was included in the top five job search goals. In addition, the qualitative data from the open-ended questions were analyzed by placing each response into a goal category (e.g., Resume Editing, Networking, and Applications), calculating the frequencies of these goal categories, and determining whether any of these goals should displace the goals already in the top five (based on the 80% criterion mentioned previously). Resume editing was the most frequent response to the open-ended job search goal question. However, only 50% of individuals indicated that this goal was in the top five job search goals; therefore, this did not displace any of the goals determined by the initial rank ordering. These goals were then used in Study 2 as the focal job search goals.

In order to examine Research Question 2, a similar procedure was used where the average rank given to each employment goal across participants was calculated and sorted. Based on this, the top five employment goals were determined to be: Work/Life Balance, Salary, Hours per Week, Commuting Time/Distance, and Length of Employment (i.e., short-term vs long-term). Given that Study 2 is primarily interested in goal setting over time, these goals were also evaluated in terms of the extent to which they might vary over time. Based on the responses, I determined each of these goals could vary over time (even if some goals may vary more than others). Similar to the process for the job search goals, the qualitative data from the open-ended question for employment goals were examined to determine if any of the initial top five employment goals should be displaced. The most frequently mentioned goal was compensation, which was already included in the top five employment goals. The second most frequently mentioned goal was Advancement. However, this was not mentioned by more than 80% of individuals as being included in the top five; therefore, it did not displace any of the goals in the top five. These goals were then used in Study 2 as the focal employment goals.

Although not a research question, personal job search demands were examined in a similar way. Individuals rank ordered items given to them and the top five personal job search demands were determined to be: Spouse, Family members (e.g., Parents, Brother, Sister), Friends, Peers and Colleagues at work, and Recruiter. Note that these personal job search demands were not expected to vary substantially over time and thus were conceptualized and measured (in Study 2) as a person-level (i.e., level 2) variable. Similar to the job search and employment goals, the qualitative data were analyzed to determine if any of the open-ended responses displaced the top five already determined by the rank ordering. The most frequent response was financial worries; however, in their explanations most individuals indicated a spouse and/or family member was the driving force behind these worries (e.g., “Financial concerns that it will be difficult to support my family”). Furthermore, financial worries were not reported frequently enough to displace the previously determined top five (i.e., not mentioned by more than 80% of individuals).

Study 2

Method

Participants. After removing 22 individuals for missing data, participants were 109 job seekers within the healthcare industry (75.2% Female; 58.7% White; mean age: 37.78 [$SD = 13.13$]; mean years of work experience: 11.17 [$SD = 10.24$]). The 22 individuals removed provided only partial data for the dispositional and Time 1 survey; therefore, they did not have any data across the measurement time points. Participants were from multiple professions, including speech language pathologist (6.4%), registered nurse (5.5%), pharmacy technician (4.6%), pharmacist (23.9%), and other (37.6%). Other professions included social worker (2.7%), medical technologist (1.8%), counselor (2.7%), and respiratory therapist (1.8%). A majority of participants (55%) did not have experience with contract work (e.g., travel, PRN, or Per Diem). Over the course of the study, participants completed an average of five ($SD = 3.77$) of the repeated measures. Over the course of the study, 34 individuals reported finding employment.

Procedure. The job seekers were solicited via e-mail to participate in the survey. Job seeker information was obtained via a national staffing company's database. No compensation was received from the company in order to conduct the study (findings from the study will be provided to the company). Participants first completed the individual difference (i.e., Conscientiousness, Locus of Control, and Personal Job Search Demands) and demographic measures. In addition, the following was measured three to four times per week for up to three weeks (Time 1 through Time 11): Perceived progress, job search goals, job search goal commitment, job search self-efficacy, employment goals, employment goal commitment, employment self-efficacy, and employment status. These measures were administered 48 hours after the first measure was completed (e.g., if the survey is completed on Monday, the following survey will be delivered on Wednesday, then Friday, then Sunday, then Tuesday, etc. until the end of data collection). The surveys were administered through Qualtrics with an auto-email delivered 48 hours after completing the previous survey. After completing each survey, the individual received an entry into a raffle drawing for one of three \$100 gift cards. This means that the more surveys completed, the more entries the individual earned.

When an individual obtained employment during the course of the survey, the individual completed a few questions regarding the characteristics of the job obtained, based on the employment goals the individual had throughout the process, and whether the individual was still searching for a position. If the individual was still searching for employment, he or she continued to complete surveys. If the individual was not continuing to search for employment, he or she completed a survey on job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment). These post-employment job attitude surveys were completed every two days as well, similar to the original survey. Due to the nature of rewards given for individuals completing the survey, these surveys were used to motivate

individuals to be truthful. For example, if an individual received an entry to a raffle drawing for each survey, he or she may be motivated to not report obtaining a job. Similarly, if an individual received full entries once he or she found a job, he or she might be motivated to falsely report obtaining a position. Therefore, by using the post-employment surveys, the participants should be motivated to be truthful on reporting that they attained a position. The attitudes measured in these post-employment surveys are thus not a focus of this research, but they may be explored in future work.

Measures.

Demographics were measured including gender, salary, age, race, and highest degree obtained.

Locus of Control was measured using the Brief Locus of Control Scale (Sapp & Harrod, 1993) developed based on Levenson's (1972) Locus of Control Scale. An example item for Internal is: "My life is determined by my own actions." An example item for Chance is: "To a great extent, my life is controlled by accidental happenings." An example item for Powerful Others is: "My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others." Adequate reliability has been demonstrated in previous studies ($\alpha = .84$; Meier, Semmer, Elfering, & Jacobshagen, 2008). Items for all three dimensions were combined to a single score where a high score indicates a higher internal locus of control. For example, high scores on the Internal subscale reflect higher internal locus of control, whereas high scores on the Chance and Powerful Others subscales reflect higher external locus of control.

Conscientiousness was measured using the Conscientiousness scale of the Big Five Aspect Scale (BFAS; DeYoung et al., 2007), including the Industriousness and Orderliness subscales. Example items for Industriousness include: "Carry out my plans," "Get things done quickly," and "Finish what I start." Example items for Orderliness include: "Like order," "Keep things tidy," and "Follow a schedule." Adequate reliability has been demonstrated across multiple samples for Industriousness ($\alpha = .79-.81$; DeYoung et al., 2007) and for Orderliness ($\alpha = .72-.80$; DeYoung, 2007). In addition, factor analytic work has confirmed that the aspects are correlated but distinct aspects of conscientiousness (DeYoung et al., 2007).

Personal Job Search Demands was measured through the perceptions individuals have of these specific personal job search demands. The items included in the top five personal job search demands were determined based on Study 1. An example item was "I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my spouse in regards to my job search" (see Appendix C for a full list of items). These items were rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. An aggregate score of personal job search demands was determined based on the average of all five demands.

Perceived Progress was measured using Wanberg et al.'s (2010) measure of perceived progress in the job search process. Example items include "I had a productive day today in relation to my job search" and "I made good progress on my job search today." Previous researchers have established the scale to be reliable ($\alpha = .72-.93$; Liu et al., 2014; Wanberg et al., 2010). In addition, factor analytic work has supported the validity of this measure (e.g., indicating it is distinct from positive affect, negative affect, and reemployment efficacy; Wanberg et al., 2010).

Goal Commitment was measured using a single item for each type of goal. The participants were prompted to indicate how committed they were to the overall

employment goal and overall job search goal on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Not at all committed) to 5 (Extremely committed).

Job Search Goals were measured using the goals developed in Study 1. These items will include multiple goals where individuals reported their goal level in regards to the item at hand. Example items include “Preparing/Revising your resume”, “Sending a resume to a prospective employer” and “Reading job postings on a job board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)”. The participants rated each of these statements to indicate their goals for the frequency (0: Never, 6: Very Often) on these items over the following two days. In order to reduce the amount of fatigue for the three to four times per week survey, only the top five job search goals were presented during each survey.

Job Search Self-Efficacy was measured using a scale adapted by Liu et al. (2014) from Judge, Locke, Durham, and Kluger (1998). Example items include “When I make plans about my job search actions, I am certain I can make them work” and “I feel that I can handle the situations that job search brings.” Adequate reliability has been demonstrated over 12 time points with mean $\alpha = .70$ (range = .64-.80; Liu et al., 2014).

Employment Goals were measured using the goals developed in Study 1. These items included multiple goals where individuals reported their goal level in regards to the item at hand. Example items that developed out of Study 1 were: “Salary”, “Work/Life Balance”, and “Hours per week”. The participants were asked to rate each of these statements to indicate their goals for employment as appropriate for the item. For example, the “Salary” employment goal was rated by a specific dollar amount, whereas the “Hours per week” employment goal was rated by the amount of hours per week (e.g., 10-19 hours per week). In order to reduce the amount of fatigue for the three times per week survey, only the top five employment goals were presented during each survey.

Employment Self-Efficacy was measured using a scale adapted by Liu et al. (2014) from Wanberg et al. (2010). Example items include “I am confident in landing a job” and “Getting a job won’t be a problem for me.” Adequate reliability has been demonstrated over 12 time points with mean $\alpha = .84$ (range = .77-.91; Liu et al. (2014). In addition, Liu et al. (2014) tested the overall measurement model and found that employment self-efficacy and job search self-efficacy were two distinct constructs at both the within-person and between-person level.

Employment Status was measured with one item: “Have you obtained employment since completing the last survey?” (1: Yes, 0: No). If the individual obtained employment, follow-up questions will be asked regarding the characteristics of that job to compare the job obtained versus the employment goals the individual had. These data will be used for exploratory purposes.

Reemployment Speed was measured by the time between starting the study and obtaining employment. When the individual obtains employment (i.e., when employment status = 1), the time elapsed from the start of study participation was used to obtain reemployment speed. More specifically, a continuous score was created based on the difference between date of obtaining employment and the date of starting the survey. For example, if an individual started the survey on May 5, 2018 and found a position on May 15, 2018, his or her score would be 10 (i.e., 10 days). Reemployment speed was then calculated by multiplying -1 by the amount of days that had elapsed (Wanberg et al., 2005).

Analyses.

Prior to testing the hypotheses, overall composites were created for job search goals and employment goals. For job search goals, the composite was an average of responses to the five job search goals. For employment goals, each goal was on a 1 to 5 Likert scale, except for salary. Following Little (2013), the salary employment goal was converted to a 0 to 5 Likert scale by using the following: *Recoded Salary Goal* = (*Salary Goal* / 250) * 5. This converts the salary to a proportion between 0 and 1 out of the total possible values (250; i.e., there were 250 response options for the salary item); then multiplying by 5 is to convert the 0-1 scale to a 0-5 scale. These composites were used to test the hypotheses; however, each job search and employment goal was also examined individually in an exploratory analysis to determine if there were different patterns across goals. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to examine the hypotheses.

Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for Level 1 variables and descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliabilities for Level 2 variables. The intraclass correlation for job search behavior self-efficacy is .72, suggesting that 72% of the variance in job search behavior self-efficacy is between persons, while 28% is within individuals. The intraclass correlation for employment self-efficacy is .69, suggesting that 69% of the variance in employment self-efficacy is between persons, while 31% is within individuals. The intraclass correlation for perceived progress is .35, suggesting that 35% of the variance in perceived progress is between persons, while 65% is within individuals. The intraclass correlation for job search goals is .72, suggesting that 72% of the variance in job search goals is between persons, while 28% is within individuals. The intraclass correlation for employment goals is .76, suggesting that 76% of the variance in employment goals is between persons, while 24% is within individuals. Based on these ICC values, hierarchical linear modeling appears to be appropriate. For each of the hierarchical linear models presented below, robust standard errors were used, level 1 predictors were group-mean centered, and level 2 predictors were grand-mean centered.

As shown in Model 1 of Table 2, job search behavior self-efficacy positively predicted job search goals, ($\gamma = .22$, $SE = .09$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 1. As shown in Model 1 of Table 3, employment self-efficacy did not significantly predict employment goals ($\gamma = -.004$, $SE = .02$, $p = .81$), failing to support Hypothesis 2. As shown in Model 1 of Table 4, perceived progress positively predicted job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = .09$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 3a. As shown in Model 1 of Table 5, perceived progress positively predicted employment self-efficacy ($\gamma = .08$, $SE = .03$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 3b.

In addition, conscientiousness did not significantly moderate the effect of employment self-efficacy on employment goals ($\gamma = -.003$, $SE = .02$, $p = .97$), failing to support Hypothesis 4a (see Model 2 of Table 3). Similarly, conscientiousness did not significantly moderate the effect of job search self-efficacy on job search goals ($\gamma = .05$, $SE = .19$, $p = .91$), failing to support Hypothesis 4b (see Model 2 of Table 2).

However, as shown in Model 2 of Table 5, locus of control significantly moderated the effect of perceived progress on employment self-efficacy ($\gamma = .12$, $SE = .05$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 5a. As shown in Figure 2, the positive effect of perceived progress on employment self-efficacy was stronger for individuals with higher internal locus of control. However, as shown in Model 2 of Table 4, locus of control did not significantly moderate the effect of perceived progress on job search self-efficacy ($\gamma = -.04$, $SE = .04$, $p = .32$), failing to support Hypothesis 5b.

As shown in Model 3 of Table 2, Personal job search demands did not significantly moderate the effect of job search self-efficacy on job search goals ($\gamma = -.06$, $SE = .09$, $p = .36$), failing to support Hypothesis 6a. In addition, as shown in Model 3 of Table 3, personal job search demands did not significantly moderate the effect of employment self-efficacy on employment goals ($\gamma = .01$, $SE = .01$, $p = .46$), failing to support Hypothesis 6b.

In order to test the effect of job search and employment goals on reemployment speed, two aggregated composites (one for job search goals and one for employment goals) were created for each individual by averaging job search goal levels and employment goal levels across time. These goal variables were then used as predictors of reemployment speed. As shown in Tables 6 and 7, results showed that average employment goal level was not a significant predictor of reemployment speed ($\beta = .20$, $p = .27$), failing to support Hypothesis 7. Results showed that average job search goal level was not a significant predictor of reemployment speed ($\beta = .16$, $p = .37$), failing to support Hypothesis 8.

Exploratory Analyses

In order to examine whether there were differences among the different types of employment goals in the relationships for Hypotheses 2, 4a, and 6b, each of the five goals was entered separately in each model. For Hypothesis 2, employment self-efficacy was examined as a predictor of each employment goal. Employment self-efficacy did not significantly predict Work/Life Balance ($\gamma = .08$, $SE = .05$, $p = .08$), Salary ($\gamma = -1.17$, $SE = 2.00$, $p = .56$), Hours per week ($\gamma = -.06$, $SE = .03$, $p = .09$), Commuting Time/Distance ($\gamma = -.08$, $SE = .04$, $p = .07$), or Length of Employment ($\gamma = -.06$, $SE = .08$, $p = .48$). However, as shown, Commuting Time/Distance and Hours per Week approached significance. For Hypothesis 4a, conscientiousness was examined as a moderator for the relationship between employment self-efficacy and each employment goal. Conscientiousness did not moderate the relationship between employment self-efficacy and Work/Life Balance ($\gamma = .16$, $SE = .14$, $p = .27$), Commuting Time/Distance ($\gamma = -.01$, $SE = .19$, $p = .98$), or Length of Employment ($\gamma = .10$, $SE = .13$, $p = .44$). Conscientiousness did moderate the relationship between employment self-efficacy and Salary ($\gamma = 23.38$, $SE = 9.17$, $p < .05$) and Hours per Week ($\gamma = .27$, $SE = .12$, $p < .05$). For Hypothesis 6b, personal job search demands was examined as a moderator for the relationship between employment self-efficacy and each employment goal. Personal job search demands did not moderate the relationship between employment self-efficacy and Work/Life Balance ($\gamma = .04$, $SE = .07$, $p = .52$), Salary ($\gamma = 2.18$, $SE = 4.18$, $p = .60$), Hours per Week ($\gamma = .05$, $SE = .05$, $p = .40$), Commuting Time/Distance ($\gamma = -.10$, $SE = .08$, $p = .23$), or Length of Employment ($\gamma = .07$, $SE = .06$, $p = .31$).

In order to examine where there were differences among the different types of job search goals in the relationships for Hypotheses 1, 4b, and 6a, each of the five goals was entered separately in each model. For Hypothesis 1, job search self-efficacy was examined as a predictor of each job search goal. Job search self-efficacy did not significantly predict “Preparing/Revising your resume” ($\gamma = .12, SE = .09, p = .21$), “Sending a Resume to a Prospective Employer” ($\gamma = .07, SE = .14, p = .63$), “Reading Job Postings on a Job Board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)” ($\gamma = .07, SE = .14, p = .63$), “Speak with others about their knowledge of potential job leads” ($\gamma = .26, SE = .16, p = .11$), or “Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry” ($\gamma = .26, SE = .14, p = .07$). For Hypothesis 4b, conscientiousness was examined as a moderator for the relationship between job search self-efficacy and each job search goal. Conscientiousness did not moderate the relationship between job search self-efficacy and “Preparing/Revising your resume” ($\gamma = .17, SE = .25, p = .50$), “Sending a Resume to a Prospective Employer” ($\gamma = .38, SE = .24, p = .11$), “Reading Job Postings on a Job Board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)” ($\gamma = .29, SE = .19, p = .12$), “Speak with others about their knowledge of potential job leads” ($\gamma = .42, SE = .27, p = .12$), or “Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry” ($\gamma = .45, SE = .29, p = .12$). For Hypothesis 6b, personal job search demands was examined as a moderator for the relationship between job search self-efficacy and each job search goal. Personal job search demands did not moderate the relationship between job search self-efficacy and “Preparing/Revising your resume” ($\gamma = .07, SE = .11, p = .54$), “Sending a Resume to a Prospective Employer” ($\gamma = .16, SE = .11, p = .15$), “Reading Job Postings on a Job Board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)” ($\gamma = .11, SE = .08, p = .18$), “Speak with others about their knowledge of potential job leads” ($\gamma = .16, SE = .10, p = .12$), or “Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry” ($\gamma = .21, SE = .11, p = .06$).

In addition, in an exploratory analysis, job search and employment goal commitment were examined as predictors of reemployment speed. Results showed that average job search goal commitment was not a significant predictor of reemployment speed ($\beta = .16, p = .38$) and average employment goal commitment was not a significant predictor of reemployment speed ($\beta = -.20, p = .28$).

Discussion

At some point in their lives, almost everyone engages in some type of job search behavior, whether individuals are looking for their first job out of high school or college or a second career. Furthermore, job searching represents an interesting context for examining self-regulatory processes, as the search for employment fundamentally involves goal pursuit. Thus, understanding the process of seeking a position may have useful practical and theoretical implications. This study contributed to the job search literature in several ways. First, this study examined job search and employment goals whereas previous research has focused on specific behaviors. Second, this study examined these goals over the course of three weeks and explored how individuals regulate these goals over time. Third, individual difference variables (i.e., conscientiousness and locus of control) were examined as potential moderators in this process. Finally, external influences (i.e., personal job search demands) were also examined as a potential moderator in the regulation of goals. Although results were mixed, this study takes a first step toward understanding job search behavior from a goal regulation framework.

Findings and Implications

In Study 1, the top five job search and employment goals were determined within a sample of healthcare workers. The top five job search goals included: Preparing/Revising your resume, Sending a resume to a prospective employer, Reading job postings on a job board (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn), Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry, and Speaking with others about their knowledge of potential job leads. These five job search goals may be informative to job seekers as these might help individuals determine which tasks to focus on in order to obtain employment. In addition, these may be useful to researchers as they represent key job search goals that could be targeted in further studies attempting to understand job seeker affect, cognition, and behavior. Furthermore, future research might build on this by examining other goals that individuals may have while searching for a job and determining if there are goal hierarchies even within job search behavior. For example, because the job search process may be sequential, it is possible that individuals set a goal to perform a particular behavior depending on which stage they are in during the process. In addition, the top five employment goals were determined in the same sample. The top five employment goals included: Work/Life Balance, Salary, Hours per Week, Commuting Time/Distance, and Length of Employment (i.e., short-term vs. long-term). These five employment goals may be informative to employers as they might help organizations determine what prospective employees consider important in their new job. In addition, future research could expand on this by examining these goals in further detail or investigating other employment goals that individuals may set during the job search process, such as autonomy of work, supportive supervisor, or culture. For example, certain professions may have goals that are specific to their occupation. Future research can

examine these goals in multiple professions (e.g., office employees) in order to determine the extent to which these goals are occupation specific.

In Study 2, predictors and outcomes associated with these job search and employment goals were examined. Overall, results supported a connection between perceived progress and self-efficacy. Findings suggested that individuals who perceived they were making good progress on their job search had higher levels of job search self-efficacy and employment self-efficacy. Thus, consistent with reasoning stemming from models of self-regulation, this research supports the notion that individuals who perceive lower progress are more likely to assess themselves as being unable to meet their goals (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1997). Few studies (see Liu et al., 2014) have examined this relationship applied to the job search process, and thus this study adds to the limited findings in this context. This finding may also have practical implications for career or vocational counselors. Specifically, this result suggests that it is possible for individuals to get discouraged and feel as if their progress is not enough, resulting in lower levels of self-efficacy. This could then feed into a vicious cycle, where individuals have lower levels of effort (i.e., give up) when they have lower levels of self-efficacy and the cycle continues. Career or vocational counselors might use knowledge of this potential effect to help job seekers recognize and avoid this type of discouraging cycle.

In regard to self-efficacy and goals, results indicated that higher self-efficacy was associated with higher goals over time for job search goals but not employment goals. The former finding (for job search goals) generally supports predictions stemming from Social Cognitive Theory and Control Theory and highlights the role of self-efficacy in influencing goal levels. The latter finding (for employment goals) is unexpected. Although nonsignificant findings can be difficult to interpret, some speculation related to this finding can be provided. For example, one issue may be the duration of the study: perhaps job seekers do not typically give up or modify their employment goals much over the course of three weeks. Thus, future research might examine this over longer time periods. In addition, it is also possible that healthcare job seekers do not vary these goals as much as other types of job seekers (e.g., white collar workers)—even in the face of lower self-efficacy—due to the high demand for the professions, such that individuals are able to be selective when pursuing employment. Similarly, employment goals may not vary much based on current self-efficacy due to individuals' job-related sense of self-worth. For example, job seekers may feel that they are “worth” a particular salary and are not willing to give up on those goals even if their self-efficacy is low because it may have been a salary they previously received for similar work. Therefore, future research might examine the connection between self-efficacy and employment goals in more detail (e.g., through qualitative methods) and in other fields. In terms of implications, it is important to note that these are goals rather than actual behavior or job attainment. Thus, for example, counselors and job seekers may use the knowledge of the relationship between job search self-efficacy and job search goals in order to avoid lower self-efficacy leading to lower goals. However, further research is needed for employment goals, given there was a lack of support for the relationship between self-efficacy and employment goals in this research.

In addition, Study 2 examined individual difference variables that may impact the job search process (i.e., conscientiousness, locus of control, and personal job demands). Results partially supported the role of locus of control in this process but failed to support

the role of conscientiousness or personal job demands. Those with higher internal locus of control had a stronger relationship between perceived progress and employment self-efficacy. This is likely due to the fact that those who have higher internal locus of control feel they are in control of their own life events rather than being controlled by external forces. Therefore, individuals with higher internal locus of control believe that their progress is a direct result of their efforts, thus influencing their self-efficacy. In terms of implications for job seekers, in general it may be better for individuals to attribute their progress to themselves rather than attributing their progress to luck or chance. However, a potential downside to this is that if the job search is not going well, individuals with higher internal locus of control may experience notable decreases in self-efficacy. Thus, job seekers with internal locus of control may need greater support in these circumstances, perhaps more so than job seekers with external locus on control (whose self-efficacy is less tied to perceived progress).

Results did not provide support for the relationship between job search and employment goals and reemployment speed. It is possible that this relationship was not found in this study because there were few participants who found employment during the survey (34 individuals reported finding employment during the study). However, it is also possible that there is not a substantial relationship between goals and speed of reemployment because goals are only indirectly related to reemployment. For instance, individuals may set job search goals but following through on these goals (i.e., carrying out the job search behaviors) is necessary to achieving reemployment. Furthermore, many external factors (e.g., demand for the job, number of other applicants) can play a role in reemployment speed. Thus, goals and outcomes such as reemployment speed may not have a strong direct connection.

Limitations and Future Directions

Several limitations of this research should be mentioned and might be addressed in future research. Although this study examined goals in the job search process over the course of three weeks, the participation rate was relatively low as on average participants only completed 5 out of 11 days. This attrition may be due in part to participant motivation. However, in addition to this, participants who are searching for a position are the only relevant individuals for the study, and individuals who obtain a position during the course of the surveys also naturally reduce the number of participation days. Due to this, power was not ideal for the study as it was slightly below .80 for detecting cross-level moderation effects. Future research could incentivize individuals beyond what was possible in the present study in order to increase participation rate. In addition, future research could attempt to recruit more participants to account for attrition.

In addition, the length of time was limited where a longer timeframe may have allowed for more variation in some variables that had limited variability (e.g., employment goals). Due to limitations of timing, this study had to examine what could be a longer-term process in a relatively short time period. However, it is likely that increasing the timeframe of the study would also increase attrition that occurs throughout the process. This might be overcome by increasing the time between survey administrations (e.g., once or twice a week instead of three to four times per week). By extending the time period, future

research might observe variation as individuals become more flexible in expectations due to lack of obtaining employment.

Furthermore, this study examined a specific population—healthcare employees—which may not vary in goal-setting behavior as much as general office/white collar employees. It is possible that there would be more variation in goal setting and perceived progress in other disciplines, such as office administration, warehouse, or sales employees where there is more variation in work settings and employers. By targeting a more general population, it is likely that other limitations would be addressed as well, such as attrition and sample size. Healthcare employees typically work longer hours and have higher stress levels (e.g., nurses; Lambert & Lambert, 2001; Lim et al., 2010); therefore, they may be less likely to participate in surveys.

This research is a start to examining goal setting behavior within the job search process; however, there are several possibilities to expand on this research. Aside from targeting a different population, future research could also examine other external demands (e.g., unemployment rate and economic conditions; Wanberg et al., 2010). It is possible that these demands are more influential over the job search process than the personal job search demands examined in this research. Although this study examined some individual difference variables that may contribute to goal setting within this context (i.e., locus of control and conscientiousness), additional individual difference variables may be important in this process (e.g., affect and emotional stability). Based on affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), for example, individuals who are high in negative affect may have less motivation to complete typical job search behaviors. Furthermore, the individual job seeker may have friends or family members who are also searching for a job who may have more or less success. Based on this, it is possible that emotional contagion could occur between individuals in the same process (e.g., new graduates).

Finally, this study failed to support the impact of job search and employment goals on speed of reemployment. It is likely there was not enough power for this analysis given that a majority of the sample did not attain employment during the course of the survey. Furthermore, there is inherent range restriction in the reemployment variable because it only contains individuals who reported they obtained a position during the course of the three weeks (i.e., reemployment speed was not available for those who obtained employment after the study was complete). Future research with a larger sample and a longer timeframe may be useful in further examining these relationships.

Conclusions

Overall, this research begins to examine the goal regulation process that occurs during job searching, which has been an underdeveloped area of research. The current findings contribute to this area by identifying common job search and employment goals, demonstrating the relationship between perceived progress and self-efficacy for job seekers, and highlighting the effects of certain personality traits on this relationship. These findings begin to uncover the goal-related processes involved in job searching and may provide a foundation for future work on this issue.

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Appendix A

Figures

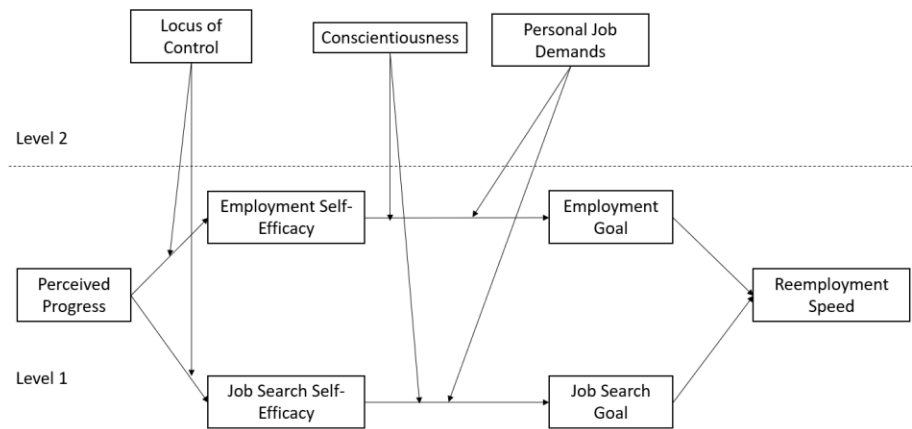


Figure 1. Theoretical Model of Proposed Relationships

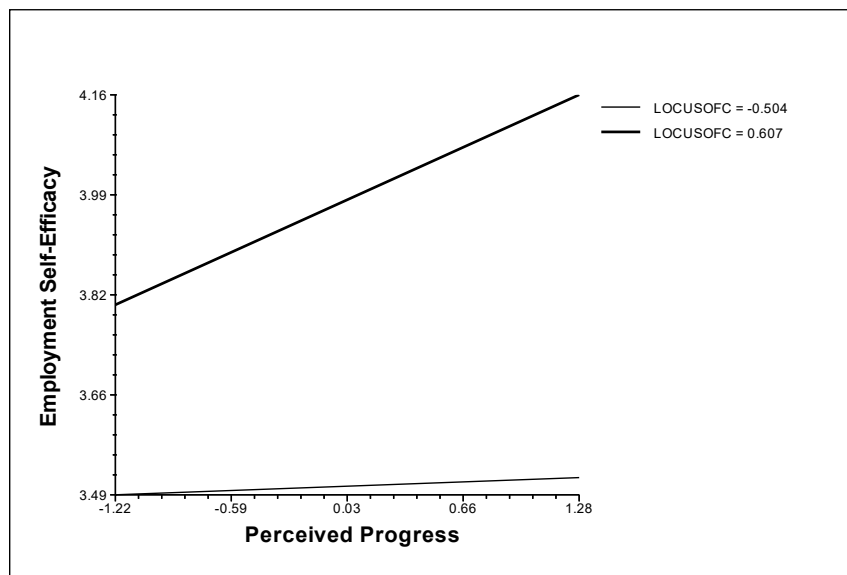


Figure 2. Perceived Progress, Employment Self-Efficacy and Locus of Control

Appendix B

Tables

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, ICCs, and Correlations for Level 1 and 2 Variables.

Variables	ICC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Level 1								
1 Perceived Progress	.35	3.34	0.70					
2 Employment Self-Efficacy	.69	3.73	0.78	.52**				
3 Job Search Self-Efficacy	.72	3.90	0.66	.34**	.74**			
4 Employment Goal	.76	3.28	0.42	-.09	-.04	-.13		
5 Job Search Goal	.72	3.91	1.06	.21*	.22*	.27**	-.16	
Level 2								
1 Locus of Control		5.29	0.82	(.76)				
2 Conscientiousness		3.73	0.50	.43**	(.87)			
3 Personal Job Demands		2.23	1.16	-.30**	-.15	(.91)		

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Cronbach's alpha on diagonal in parentheses. Relationships for the Level 1 variables were obtained by aggregating the variables to the individual level and then computing correlations.

Table 2. HLM Models with Job Search Goals as Outcome.

Fixed Effects Estimates (Top) and Variance Estimates (Bottom) for HLM Models				
Fixed Effects	Null	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept				
Intercept, γ_{00}	3.91*** (.11)	3.90*** (.11)	3.90*** (.11)	3.91*** (.11)
Conscientiousness, γ_{01}			.34 (.21)	
Personal Job Search Demands, γ_{01}				.14 (.09)
Job Search Self-Efficacy Slope				
Intercept, γ_{10}		.22* (.09)	.14 (.11)	.18 (.10)
Conscientiousness, γ_{11}			.05 (.19)	
Personal Job Search Demands, γ_{11}				-.06 (.09)
Random Effects	Variance Component			
Intercept, μ_{0j}	1.00	.90	.99	.99
Job Search Self-Efficacy Slope, μ_{1j}		.02	.21	.19
Level 1, r_{ij}	.39	.40	.35	.35
Model Fit				
-2* LL (deviance)	1072.64	1015.39	1062.31	1065.32

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3. HLM Models with Employment Goals as Outcome.

Fixed Effects Estimates (Top) and Variance Estimates (Bottom) for HLM Models				
Fixed Effects	Null	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept				
Intercept, γ_{00}	3.29*** (.04)	3.29*** (.04)	3.29*** (.04)	3.29*** (.04)
Conscientiousness, γ_{01}			.19 (.09)	
Personal Job Search				.06 (.04)
Demands, γ_{01}				
Employment Self-efficacy				
Slope				
Intercept, γ_{10}		-.004 (.02)	-.003 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
Conscientiousness, γ_{11}			.01 (.05)	
Personal Job Search				.01 (.01)
Demands, γ_{11}				
Random Effects	Variance Component			
Intercept, μ_{0j}	.16	.16	.15	.16
Employment Self-Efficacy			.001	.001
Slope, μ_{1j}				
Level 1, r_{ij}	.05	.05	.05	.05
Model Fit				
-2* LL (deviance)	145.93	151.39	153.87	159.14

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4. HLM Models with Job Search Self-Efficacy as Outcome.

Fixed Effects Estimates (Top) and Variance Estimates (Bottom) for HLM Models			
Fixed Effects	Null	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept			
Intercept, γ_{00}	3.90*** (.07)	3.90*** (.07)	3.90*** (.07)
Locus of Control, γ_{01}			.29*** (.08)
Perceived Progress Slope			
Intercept, γ_{10}		.09** (.03)	.09** (.03)
Locus of Control, γ_{11}			-.04 (.04)
Random Effects	Variance Component		
Intercept, μ_{0j}	.40	.41	.35
Perceived Progress Slope, μ_{1j}		.001	.001
Level 1, r_{ij}	.20	.20	.20
Model Fit			
-2* LL (deviance)	762.86	760.57	756.29
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$			

Table 5. HLM Models with Employment Self-Efficacy as Outcome.

Fixed Effects Estimates (Top) and Variance Estimates (Bottom) for HLM Models			
Fixed Effects	Null	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept			
Intercept, γ_{00}	3.72*** (.08)	3.72*** (.08)	3.72*** (.08)
Locus of Control, γ_{01}			.42*** (.08)
Perceived Progress Slope			
Intercept, γ_{10}		.08* (.03)	.07* (.03)
Locus of Control, γ_{11}			.12* (.05)
Random Effects	Variance Component		
Intercept, μ_{0j}	.55	.55	.44
Perceived Progress Slope, μ_{1j}		.00	.00
Level 1, r_{ij}	.25	.25	.24
Model Fit			
-2* LL (deviance)	862.65	863.10	846.12

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 6. Regression Analysis for Job Goals and Reemployment Speed

Model 1	Reemployment Speed				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Job Search Goals	-1.21	1.34	.16	0.9	.37
R^2	.03				
<i>F</i>	0.82				

Note. N = 32.

Table 7. Regression Analysis for Employment Goals and Reemployment Speed

	Reemployment Speed				
Model 1	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Employment Goals	3.56	3.17	-.20	-1.12	.27
<i>R</i> ²	.04				
<i>F</i>	1.26				

Note. N = 32.

Appendix C

Survey Items

Study 1:

To determine your eligibility for this study, please indicate yes or no for the statements below:

- a) I enjoy spending time outdoors (hiking, biking, camping, etc.)
- b) I'm searching for a job.
- c) I'm pursuing a post-secondary degree.
- d) I'm looking to retire from the workforce this year.

You will now answer a series of open-ended questions about your job search. Please be sure to answer the question fully.

- 1) What goals do you have in your job search process? A job search goal is a goal set regarding the behaviors performed during an individual's job search, such as writing or editing a resume, applying for positions, and networking with others.
- 2) Enter at least 5 goals. Rank them in order of importance.
- 3) Have these goals changed since you started your job search? Why?
- 4) Rank these in order of importance in terms of your job search goals.
 - a) Reading job postings on a job board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)
 - b) Posting your resume/information on job board websites (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)
 - c) Preparing/Revising your resume
 - d) Sending out resume to potential employers
 - e) Filling a job application
 - f) Reading a book or article about obtaining a job or changing jobs
 - g) Having a job interview with a prospective employer
 - h) Talking with friends or relatives about possible job leads
 - i) Contacting an employment agency, executive search firm, or state employment service
 - j) Speaking with previous employers or business acquaintances about their knowing of potential job leads
 - k) Telephoning a prospective employer
 - l) Using current within company resources (e.g., colleagues) to generate potential job leads
 - m) Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry
 - n) Sending a resume to a prospective employer

You will now answer a series of open-ended questions about the characteristics of your desired job. Please be sure to answer the question fully.

- 5) What goals do you have for the characteristics of your desired job? A job characteristic goal is a goal targeted towards obtaining employment with certain job characteristics, such as salary, advancement opportunities, and job complexity.
- 6) Enter at least 5 goals. Rank them in order of importance.
- 7) Have these goals changed since you started your job search? Why?
- 8) Rank these in order of importance in terms of your desired job characteristics.
 - a) Autonomy
 - b) Complexity in the job
 - c) Variety in tasks and skills required
 - d) Proper feedback from the job or others
 - e) Social Support from colleagues and/or managers
 - f) Salary
 - g) Commuting time/distance
 - h) Company reputation (e.g., Fortune 500 Company)
 - i) Hours per week
 - j) Length of employment (i.e., short-term vs. long-term)
 - k) Advancement Opportunities
 - l) Company Culture
 - m) Benefits (e.g., Vacation time, medical benefits, 401k)
 - n) Training provided
 - o) Job security
 - p) Work/Life Balance
 - q) Size of the Company

You now will answer a series of open-ended questions about personal demands in your job search. Please be sure to answer the question fully.

- 9) What are some personal demands in your job search process? A personal job search demand refer to difficulties regarding family relationships and personal finances. Examples include financial worries and strain on the family stemming from the job search.
- 10) Have these personal job search demands changed since you have started your job search? How?
- 11) Rank these in order of importance in terms of personal demands on your job search.
 - a) Spouse
 - b) Parents
 - c) Children
 - d) Bills/Finances
 - e) Siblings
 - f) Friends/Colleagues

Please answer the following demographic questions.

- 12) What is your gender?
- 13) What is your age?
- 14) Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?

- a) White
 - b) Black
 - c) Hispanic/Latino
 - d) Asian
 - e) Middle-Eastern
 - f) Mixed race
 - g) Pacific Islander
 - h) Native American
 - i) Other
- 15) Is English your native language?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 16) What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
- a) Less than high school degree
 - b) High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
 - c) Some college but no degree
 - d) Associate degree in college (2-year)
 - e) Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
 - f) Master's degree
 - g) Professional degree (e.g., MD, DDS)
 - h) Doctoral degree
- 17) What is your current career (e.g., ICU nurse, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physician assistant)?
- a) Speech Language Pathologist
 - b) Physical Therapist
 - c) Occupational Therapist
 - d) Critical Care Nurse (ICU)
 - e) Cath Lab Nurse
 - f) Emergency Room Nurse
 - g) Operating Room Nurse
 - h) Registered Nurse (RN)
 - i) Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - j) Surgical Technologist
 - k) Clinical Pharmacist
 - l) Pharmacy Technician
 - m) Pharmacist
 - n) Emergency Medicine Physician
 - o) Family Medicine Physician
 - p) Internal Medicine Physician
 - q) Pediatrician
 - r) Psychiatrist
 - s) Physician Assistant
 - t) Nurse Practitioner
 - u) Other, Indicate below:
- 18) If other, indicate below:

Study 2: Dispositional and Day 1

- 1) To determine your eligibility for this study, please indicate yes or no for the statements below:
 - a) I enjoy spending time outdoors (hiking, biking, camping, etc.)
 - b) I'm searching for a job.
 - c) I'm pursuing a post-secondary degree.
 - d) I'm looking to retire from the workforce this year.

Locus of Control (Sapp & Harrod, 1993):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 7: Strongly Agree

- 2) Below, there are phrases describing people's behaviors. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes you. **Describe yourself as you generally are now**, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age. My life is determined by my own actions.
 - a) I am usually able to protect my personal interests.
 - b) I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.
 - c) To a great extent, my life is controlled by accidental happenings.
 - d) Often, there is no chance of protecting my personal interest from bad luck happenings.
 - e) When I get what I want, it's usually because I'm lucky.
 - f) People like me have very little chance of protecting our personal interests where they conflict with those of strong pressure group.
 - g) My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others.
 - h) I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people.

Conscientiousness (DeYoung et al., 2007):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 3) Below, there are phrases describing people's behaviors. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes you. **Describe yourself as you generally are now**, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age.
 - a) Carry out my plans.
 - b) Waste my time.
 - c) Find it difficult to get down to work.
 - d) Mess things up.
 - e) Finish what I start.
 - f) Don't put my mind on the task at hand.
 - g) Get things done quickly.
 - h) Always know what I am doing.
 - i) Postpone decisions.
 - j) Am easily distracted.
 - k) Leave my belongings around.
 - l) Like order.
 - m) Keep things tidy.
 - n) Follow a schedule.

- o) Am not bothered by messy people.
- p) Want everything to be “just right.”
- q) Am not bothered by disorder.
- r) Dislike routine.
- s) See that rules are observed.
- t) Want every detail taken care of.

Perceived Progress (Wanberg et al., 2010):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 4) Thinking about the previous 2 days, using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item. Over the past two days, I have made progress in my job search.
 - a) Over the past two days, I have made advancement in job search.
 - b) Over the past two days, I moved forward in job search.
 - c) Over the past two days, things did not go well with my job search.
 - d) Over the past two days, I got a lot less done with my job search than I had hoped.
 - e) Over the past two days, I hardly made any progress in looking for a job.

Job Search Self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 5) Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.
 - a) When I make plans about my job search actions, I am certain I can make them work.
 - b) I feel that I am strong enough to overcome the difficulties in the job search process.
 - c) I feel that I can handle the situations that job search brings.

Employment Self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 6) Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.
 - a) I am confident in landing a job.
 - b) Getting a job won't be a problem for me.
 - c) I am optimistic about getting a job.

Job Search Goals:

Response Scale: 1: Never to 6: Very Often

- a) Thinking about the next two days, indicate how frequently you plan to engage in the behaviors listed below.
 - i) Preparing/Revising your resume/cover letter
 - ii) Sending a resume/cover letter to a prospective employer
 - iii) Reading job postings on a job board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)
 - iv) Speak with others about their knowledge of potential job leads
 - v) Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry

Job Search Goal Commitment

Response Scale: 1: Not at all committed to 5: Extremely Committed

- a) Based on the previous goals, answer the question below about your commitment to the job search goals listed **as a whole**.
 - i) How committed are you to these goals?

Employment Goals

- a) Overall, based on the options below, please indicate your level of the employment goals listed below as they are **right now**. Indicate what your current GOALS are for a NEW JOB in term of these characteristics.
 - i) Work/Life Balance
 - (1) **Response Scale: 1: None to little to 5: Perfect Amount**
 - ii) In dollars (1000s), I prefer the following yearly salary (e.g., selecting 45 on the scale would indicate \$45,000):
 - (1) **Response Scale: 0 to 250**
 - iii) Hours per week
 - (1) **Response Scale: 1: 0-9 hours per week to 5: 40 or more hours per week**
 - iv) Commuting Time/Distance
 - (1) **Response Scale: 1: 0-19 minutes from home to 5: 60 or more minutes from home**
 - v) Length of Employment (i.e., short-term vs long-term)
 - (1) **Response Scale: 1: Short Term (Up to 2 months) to 5: Long Term (6+ years)**

Employment Goal Commitment

Response Scale: 1: Not at all committed to 5: Extremely Committed

- a) Based on the previous goals, answer the question below about your commitment to the employment goals listed **as a whole**.
 - i) How committed are you to these goals?

Personal Job Demands

Response Scale: 0: NA to 5: Strongly Agree

- a) Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.
 - i) I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my spouse in regards to my job search.
 - ii) I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my family members (e.g., Parents, Brother, Sister) in regards to my job search.
 - iii) I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my friends in regards to my job search.
 - iv) I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my peers/colleagues at work in regards to my job search.
 - v) I perceive I have a lot of pressure from my recruiter in regards to my job search.

Demographic Questions

Please answer the following demographic questions.

- 2) What is your gender?
- 3) What is your age?
- 4) Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?
 - a) White
 - b) Black

- c) Hispanic/Latino
 - d) Asian
 - e) Middle-Eastern
 - f) Mixed race
 - g) Pacific Islander
 - h) Native American
 - i) Other
- 5) Is English your native language?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 6) What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
- a) Less than high school degree
 - b) High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
 - c) Some college but no degree
 - d) Associate degree in college (2-year)
 - e) Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
 - f) Master's degree
 - g) Professional degree (e.g., MD, DDS)
 - h) Doctoral degree
- 7) What is your current career (e.g., ICU nurse, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physician assistant)?
- a) Speech Language Pathologist
 - b) Physical Therapist
 - c) Occupational Therapist
 - d) Critical Care Nurse (ICU)
 - e) Cath Lab Nurse
 - f) Emergency Room Nurse
 - g) Operating Room Nurse
 - h) Registered Nurse (RN)
 - i) Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - j) Surgical Technologist
 - k) Clinical Pharmacist
 - l) Pharmacy Technician
 - m) Pharmacist
 - n) Emergency Medicine Physician
 - o) Family Medicine Physician
 - p) Internal Medicine Physician
 - q) Pediatrician
 - r) Psychiatrist
 - s) Physician Assistant
 - t) Nurse Practitioner
 - u) Other, Indicate below:
- 8) If other, indicate below:
- 9) What is your current experience level (in years)?
- a) 0 to 30 years

- 10) Have you performed contract work before (e.g., travel, PRN, Per Diem)?
- a) Yes
 - b) No

Study 2: Day 2 and Beyond

Perceived Progress (Wanberg et al., 2010):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 7) Thinking about the previous 2 days, using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item. Over the past two days, I have made progress in my job search.
- a) Over the past two days, I have made advancement in job search.
 - b) Over the past two days, I moved forward in job search.
 - c) Over the past two days, things did not go well with my job search.
 - d) Over the past two days, I got a lot less done with my job search than I had hoped.
 - e) Over the past two days, I hardly made any progress in looking for a job.

Job Search Self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 8) Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.
- a) When I make plans about my job search actions, I am certain I can make them work.
 - b) I feel that I am strong enough to overcome the difficulties in the job search process.
 - c) I feel that I can handle the situations that job search brings.

Employment Self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2014):

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 9) Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.
- a) I am confident in landing a job.
 - b) Getting a job won't be a problem for me.
 - c) I am optimistic about getting a job.

Job Search Goals:

Response Scale: 1: Never to 6: Very Often

- b) Thinking about the next two days, indicate how frequently you plan to engage in the behaviors listed below.
- i) Preparing/Revising your resume/cover letter
 - ii) Sending a resume/cover letter to a prospective employer
 - iii) Reading job postings on a job board website (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn)
 - iv) Speak with others about their knowledge of potential job leads
 - v) Asking for a referral to someone who might have helpful information or advice about my career or industry

Job Search Goal Commitment

Response Scale: 1: Not at all committed to 5: Extremely Committed

- b) Based on the previous goals, answer the question below about your commitment to the job search goals listed as a whole.
- i) How committed are you to these goals?

Employment Goals

- b) Overall, based on the options below, please indicate your level of the employment goals listed below as they are **right now**. Indicate what your current GOALS are for a NEW JOB in term of these characteristics.
- i) Work/Life Balance
(1) **Response Scale: 1: None to little to 5: Perfect Amount**
 - ii) In dollars (1000s), I prefer the following yearly salary (e.g., selecting 45 on the scale would indicate \$45,000):
(1) **Response Scale: 0 to 250**
 - iii) Hours per week
(1) **Response Scale: 1: 0-9 hours per week to 5: 40 or more hours per week**
 - iv) Commuting Time/Distance
(1) **Response Scale: 1: 0-19 minutes from home to 5: 60 or more minutes from home**
 - v) Length of Employment (i.e., short-term vs long-term)
(1) **Response Scale: 1: Short Term (Up to 2 months) to 5: Long Term (6+ years)**

Employment Goal Commitment

Response Scale: 1: Not at all committed to 5: Extremely Committed

- b) Based on the previous goals, answer the question below about your commitment to the employment goals listed **as a whole**.
- i) How committed are you to these goals?

Employment Status

- 1) Have you obtained employment since completing the last survey?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 2) Based on your employment goals, what were the characteristics of this position?
 - a) Carry over items from employment goals
- 3) Are you still searching for a new position?

Response Scale: 1: Definitely not to 5: Definitely yes

If yes is selected on Question 4, the following items will be displayed.

Job Satisfaction

Response Scale: 1: Extremely dissatisfied to 5: Extremely satisfied

- 4) How satisfied are/were you with your current or most recent job as a whole?

Organizational Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1990)

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 7: Strongly Agree

Affective Commitment (ACS)

- 5) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
- 6) I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
- 7) I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization. (R)
- 8) I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization. (R)
- 9) I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization. (R)
- 10) This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

Continuance Commitment (CCS)

- 11) Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.

- 12) It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
- 13) Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
- 14) I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
- 15) If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.
- 16) One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

Normative Commitment (NCS)

- 17) I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer. (R)
- 18) Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.
- 19) I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
- 20) This organization deserves my loyalty.
- 21) I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.
- 22) I owe a great deal to my organization.

Career Satisfaction (Greenhaus et al., 1990)

Response Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree

- 23) The following questions ask about your current or most recent occupation.
 - a) I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
 - b) I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my overall career goals.
 - c) I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for income.
 - d) I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for advancement.
 - e) I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

Appendix D

R Code for Power Analysis

```

library(lme4)
l2n = 115 #Level-2 sample size
l1n = 6 #Average Level-1 sample size
iccx = .12 #ICC1 for X
g00 = -0.068364 #Intercept for B0j equation (Level-1 intercept)
g01 = 0.345048 #Direct cross-level effect of average Xj on Y
g02 = 0.022851 #Direct cross-level effect of W on Y
g03 = 0.184721 #Between-group interaction effect between W and Xj on Y
g10 = 0.451612 #Intercept for B1j equation (Level-1 effect of X on Y)
g11 = 0.148179 #Cross-level interaction effect
vu0j = 0.00320 #Variance component for intercept
vu1j = 0.08954 #SD of Level-1 slopes
vresid = 0.76877 #Variance component for residual, within variance
alpha = .05 #Rejection level
REPS = 1000 #Number of Monte Carlo replications, 1,000 recommended
hlmmmr <-function(iccx,l2n,l1n,g00,g01,g02,g03,g10,g11, vu0j,vu1j,alpha){
  require(lme4)
  Wj = rnorm(l2n, 0, sd = 1)
  Xbarj = rnorm(l2n, 0, sd = sqrt(iccx)) ## Level-2 effects on x
  b0 = g00 + g01*Xbarj + g02*Wj + g03*Xbarj*Wj + rnorm(l2n,0,sd = sqrt(vu0j))
  b1 = g10 + g11*Wj + rnorm(l2n,0,sd = sqrt(vu1j))
  dat = expand.grid(l1id = 1:l1n,l2id = 1:l2n)
  dat$X = rnorm(l1n*l2n,0,sd = sqrt(1-iccx)) + Xbarj[dat[,2]]
  dat$Xbarj = Xbarj[dat[,2]]
  dat$Wj = Wj[dat[,2]]
  dat$Y <- b0[dat$l2id]+ b1[dat$l2id]*(dat$X-dat$Xbarj) + rnorm(l1n*l2n,0,sd =
sqrt(vresid))
  dat$Xc=(dat$X - Xbarj[dat[,2]])
  lmm.fit<- lmer(Y ~ Xc + Xbarj + Wj + Xbarj:Wj + Xc: Wj+(Xc|l2id),data = dat)
  fe.g <- fixef(lmm.fit)
  fe.se <- sqrt(diag(vcov(lmm.fit)))
  ifelse(abs(fe.g[6]/fe.se[6]) > qt(1-alpha/2,l2n-4),1,0)
}
simout = replicate(REPS,hlmmmr(iccx,l2n,l1n,g00,g01,g02,g03,g10,g11,vu0j,vu1j,alpha))
powerEST = mean(simout)
powerEST

```