PART II

The Role of Emotion in Shaping Proactivity in Different Contexts
In this chapter, I apply Ashkanasy’s (2003) Five-Level Model of Emotions in the Workplace (FLMEW; see also Ashkanasy and Dorris, 2017; Ashkanasy and Humphrey, 2011a) as an overarching framework intended to understand the nexus of emotions and proactive behaviour at different levels of organizational analysis. Consistent with the other chapters in this volume, I utilize the definition of proactivity given in Parker, Williams, and Turner (2006), namely ‘self-initiated and future-oriented action that aims to change and improve the situation or oneself’ (p 636). This is a broad definition and, as such, covers a wide range of (mostly positive) forms of behaviour in the workplace that occur at every level of analysis. For example, a proactive employee would make constructive suggestions to improve work practices (Ashford, Sutcliffe, and Christianson, 2009; LePine and Van Dyne, 1998); would seek as a new hire to discover information and to build relationships with senior colleagues (Ashford and Black, 1996); or would reach out to employees to assess their needs and to improve team performance (Rank et al, 2007). Bindl and Parker (2010) were the first to outline the multilevel nature and effects of proactive behaviour, including higher performance at the individual level, improved team effectiveness, and improved organizational performance (see also Parker, Bindl, and Strauss, 2010. In the following sections, I first introduce the FLMEW, and then look at the relationship of emotion and proactive behaviour at each of the five levels in the model. I conclude with discussion of how the components of the model fit together to provide an integrated multilevel model of emotions and proactivity.
in organizations, and suggest some directions for future research on emotions and organizational proactivity at each of the levels of analysis.

The Five-Level Model of Emotions in the Workplace

In this model, Ashkanasy (2003) sets out five distinct but overlapping levels of analysis: (1) within person temporal variability, (2) between-person individual differences, (3) interpersonal interactions, (4) groups and teams, and (5) organization-wide. The first level of the model concerns employees’ experience of in-the-moment affect and emotion (Clark, Watson, and Leeka, 1989), focusing on how employees respond to in-the-moment ‘affective events’ that occur every day in their workplace (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). At Level 2, the focus shifts to how emotions are enacted and experienced by different employees. Key variables at this level are trait affectivity (Watson and Tellegen, 1985) and emotional intelligence (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Level 3 in the model addresses the ways employees communicate and perceive emotions in interpersonal exchanges. Central concepts at this level are interpersonal emotional regulation (Troth et al, 2018; Zaki and Williams, 2013) and emotional labour (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). Level 4 in the model focuses on groups, including the concepts of group affective tone (George, 2000), emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, 1993) and emotional leadership (Humphrey, 2002). Finally, at Level 5, the model addresses emotional climate (de Rivera, 1992) and organizational culture (Ashkanasy and Härtel, 2014). Importantly, and as Ashkanasy (2003) points out, emotional behaviours and attitudes at each of the five levels, although conceptually distinct, cross the different levels of analysis, resulting in a complex and interconnected picture of organizational functioning. In effect, emotions at the different levels ‘cascade throughout the organization, subsequently impacting key organizational variables that underpin organizational performance’ (Ashkanasy, Härtel, and Bialkowski, 2020, p 375). In the following sections, I introduce the five levels of analysis and discuss each with particular emphasis on research into employee proactive behaviour.

Level 1: Within person

The central conceptual framework at Level 1 in the FLMEW is Affective Events Theory (AET: Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). According to these authors, ‘affective events’ generated within the organizational environment (for example, change, leader behaviour) lead to employees experiencing discrete emotions (such as fear, anger,
happiness, or sadness) that are acute and object-oriented (for example, fear of a threat or anger when goals are thwarted). These reactions can then become moods. These tend not to be object oriented and are longer lasting than emotions (Frijda, 1986).

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) argue further that these emotional reactions (both emotions and moods) then translate into one of two forms of behaviour. The first is ‘affect-driven’ behaviour that may be either positive (for example, spontaneously helping a colleague) or negative (for example, shouting at a colleague). This form of behaviour represents a direct response to the event, mediated by the employee’s particular emotional or mood state. The second form is ‘judgement-driven’ behaviour, such as quitting or deciding to be more productive, which come about because of attitudes (for example, job commitment, job satisfaction, anomie) resulting from the affective event (and the subsequent emotional reaction).

With regard to proactive behaviour specifically, it seems that this form of behaviour can be either affect-driven or judgement-driven. Evidence of this may be found in the work of Fritz and Sonnentag (2009), who conducted a study involving 172 clerical assistants in Germany. These researchers asked their study participants to complete diary entries over four days, and found that employees’ proactive behaviour often emerged spontaneously in response to their experience of stress related to time pressure, a form of negative affect (see also Fay and Sonnentag, 2002; Lebel, 2017). Over the longer term, however, Fritz and Sonnentag found that study participants’ proactive behaviour tended to be associated with positive affect. In other words, while affect-driven proactive behaviour seems to emerge spontaneously in response to negative affective events (time pressure), in the longer term, employees’ propensity to engage in proactive behaviour appears to be more likely if the employees are in a positive state. This conclusion would appear to support Morrison and Phelps (1999, p 405), who describe proactive behaviour as a ‘calculated, deliberate decision process’.

**Level 2: Between-persons**

Level 2 of the FLMEW concerns the role of individual differences. Ashkanasy (2003; see also Ashkanasy and Dorris, 2017) examined specifically two emotion-related individual differences: (1) emotional intelligence (Mayer and Salovey, 1997) and (2) trait affect (Watson and Tellegen, 1985). Consistent with Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), Ashkanasy argued that such individual differences serve to moderate the effect of affective events on employees’ subsequent emotional
reactions. Thus, compared to low emotional intelligence employees, high emotional intelligence employees should be better able to perceive, to assimilate, to understand, and ultimately to manage their emotions. Jordan, Ashkanasy, and Härtel (2002) argue that high emotional intelligence employees can consequently be expected to be less reactive to affective events (such as job loss) than their low emotional intelligence colleagues (see also Lopes et al, 2006). Concerning trait affect, it is axiomatic that high positive affect (PA) individuals should be more likely to experience positive affect in response to positive affective events than their low PA peers, while high negative affect (NA) individuals should be more reactive to negative affective events than their low NA colleagues (compare Dalal et al, 2012).

The particular individual difference relevant to proactive behaviour is trait proactivity (or proactive personality, see Bateman and Crant, 1993), which research has found to link to career success (Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer, 1999), job performance (Thompson, 2005), and motivation to learn (Major, Turner, and Fletcher, 2006). More recently, in a field study involving 250 public employees Bhutan et al (2016) found that the relationship of trait proactivity to creativity was related to their study participants’ emotional intelligence, such that the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity was higher for participants with higher trait proactivity.

In another field study, this time involving 200 Chinese employees, Li, Liang, and Crant (2010) found the relationship between proactivity and job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour to be stronger in the presence of a positive organizational climate and positive leader–member relationship quality. I argue that these findings suggest that positivity and, by extension, trait PA acts to facilitate the association between trait proactivity and performance outcomes.

**Level 3: Interpersonal relationships**

At Level 3 in the FLMEW, Ashkanasy (2003) looks at the means by which organizational employees communicate emotions to others within and without the organization, focusing on emotional labour, defined by (Hochschild, 1983) as ‘management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display’ (p 7). Grandey (2000) subsequently made the case that emotional labour is, in essence, a special case of impersonal emotional regulation, in so far as employees seek to communicate particular emotions according to their perception of their organization’s mandated display rules (Diefendorff and Richards, 2003). In its classical form, emotional labour can mean either surface
acting (where the actor follows organizational display rules and displays emotions that may not represent her or his true feelings) or deep acting (where the actor summons up emotional memories in order to display the mandated emotional expression). The question arises here, however, as to whether an employee needs to engage in proactive behaviour in order to undertake emotional labour appropriately.

In fact, this is what Randolph and Dahling (2013) found in a field study involving 120 employed service workers. Specifically, these authors found that trait proactive employees are especially responsive to organizational display rules, and suffer fewer stressful consequences when doing so. While research with regard to the other forms of interpersonal emotion regulation to date is sparse, there is no reason to doubt that proactive behaviour should not affect these forms any the less than they do in the case of pure extrinsic interpersonal regulation. This would apply especially in the case of co-regulation, which involves both parties actively cooperating to regulate their own and the other party’s emotions. In particular, if one of the people involved in the exchange were high on trait proactivity, for example, then it would be expected that s/he would take the lead in this process.

Another aspect where proactivity could play a role at Level 3 concerns the role of emotional regulation in leadership, where Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman (1998) noted that emotional labour represents a means for effective leaders to maximize their relationships with employees. Humphrey, Pollack, and Hawver (2008) subsequently referred to this as ‘leading with emotional labour’ (see also Ashkanasy and Humphrey, 2011b). Hunt, Gardner, and Fischer (2008) found in particular that, to affect followers’ emotions, behaviours and attitudes effectively, leaders need to empathize with their followers; in other words, to feel and to express the emotions perceived by followers. Moreover, surface acting (and the associated feelings of inauthenticity experienced when displaying emotions at odds with felt emotion) can result in stress (Grandey, 2000; 2003).

Taking into account Randloph and Dahling’s (2013) findings that trait proactive employees are more comfortable than their less proactive peers when the organization requires them to engage in emotional labour (especially when they employ deep acting), it seems reasonable to conclude that leaders who engage in proactive behaviour should also be more capable of successful ‘leading with emotional labour’. Randolph and Dahling explain this in terms of Diefendorff and Gosserand’s (2003) ‘control theory’ of emotional labour, which holds that employees strive to maintain consistency between their felt and displayed emotions.
Level 4: Groups and teams

The fourth level in the FLMEW encompasses group processes and especially team leadership, which Ashkanasy (2003) pitches as a means to facilitate positive group emotions (Krzeminska, Lim, and Härtel, 2018). In this regard, Williams, Parker, and Turner (2010) define proactive teams in terms the mean level of proactivity (or proactive personality in a team). George (2000) defines group affective tone in a similar fashion: representing the mean level of a particular affective state among group members. George argues specifically that leaders play a central role in setting a group’s affective tone (which is also enabled by processes of emotional contagion, see Barsade, 2002; Sy, Côté, and Saavedra, 2005; Hatfield et al, 1993). Chiu, Owens, and Tesluk (2016) similarly found that team proactivity is associated with team leadership, especially when leadership is shared.

Sy, Côté and Saavedra (2005) found moreover that leaders have a special role to play in engendering a positive emotional tone in a group. In turn, and as Gooty et al (2010) argue, groups whose leaders foster a positive emotional tone become both more cohesive and more effective (see also Humphrey, 2002). More recently, Krzeminska, Lim, and Härtel (2018) found in a study of emergency services teams that leaders who encourage and achieve a positive workgroup emotional tone reduce team members’ occupational stress and enhance their psychological capital.

Härtel and Page (2009) subsequently introduced the idea of discrete emotional crossover, which they define as ‘the transmission of discrete emotions such as anger, joy, contentment, and fear from one individual to another in the same social environment’ (p 238). Härtel and Page propose in particular that such crossover is a product of emotional contagion, and also involves importation of emotional experiences from outside the workplace (for example, at home or in social activities).

Petitta, Jiang, and Härtel (2017) later noted that the frequency and intensity of social interactions act as precursors of emotional contagion. Ashkanasy and his associates (2020) extend this notion by observing that ‘teams with important and frequent intra-group and leader interactions are likely to “catch” each other’s emotions, while teams whose interactions do not meet these criteria may not’ (p 378). In this regard, Petitta et al theorized that contagion in work-teams can be a double-edged sword. Thus, positive emotions can act as a positive resource likely to improve team performance, while contagion of negative emotions represents a negative burden on the team likely to result in reduced team performance.
Given that we know from Fritz and Sonnentag’s (2009) work that proactive behaviour is associated over the longer term with positive affect, it should also follow that members of groups that possess a leader-facilitated positive affective tone should also display more proactivity. This is indeed what Strauss, Griffin, and Rafferty (2009) found in a study involving 196 Australian public servants. Specifically, these authors found that transformational leadership leads to increased affective organizational commitment (associated with positivity, see Youssef and Luthans, 2007) that in turn leads to team and organizational member proactivity. In another study, Loi, Lam, and Xu (2016) surveyed 258 Chinese hospitality employees nested in 63 teams and found that the high proactivity employees in their study were less likely to quit their jobs in the face of emotional demands within their work team.

**Level 5: The organization as a whole**

The focus at Level 5 of the FLMEW is on the organizational as a whole and, in particular, the organization’s climate and culture. Schneider (2000) defines organizational climate as the employees’ immediate collective conscious perceptions of their work environment (see also Schneider, Ehrhart, and Macey, 2011). De Rivera (1992, p 2) describes affective climate as ‘an objective (emotional) phenomenon that can be palpably sensed’. This is in contrast to organizational culture, which Härtel and Ashkanasy (2011) consider analogous to a ‘fossil record’. As such, and as Schein (1992) argues, culture derives ultimately from the organization’s founder and then evolves from the collective experiences of organizational members. Thus, culture determines the organization’s rules and norms of emotional expression (or display rules, see Diefendorff and Richards, 2003) and the rules governing social interactions between organizational members. James et al (2008) note in particular that, although organizational culture and climate are distinct constructs, both contain an affective component (see also Ashkanasy, 2007). Thus, while organizational culture sets the norms for display of affect, the actual manifestation of affective climate is reflected in the organization’s climate. Thus, as Virtanen (2000) notes, ‘climate is … more manifest than culture, and culture more latent than climate’ (p 349). Taken together, and as Ashkanasy (2003) and Pizer and Härtel (2005) argue, the means by which organizational members experience the emotional climate of their organization on a daily basis ultimately derives from the organization’s culture.
Ashkanasy and Nicholson (2003) examined in particular the ‘climate of fear’ in organizations and found that such climate was determined by the way organizational units were managed on a day-by-day basis. Ashkanasy and Daus (2002) note further that culture and climate typically combine to determine whether the organization is a source of ‘toxic emotions’ to its employees (compare Frost, 2007, Leavitt, 2007).

Härtel (2008) coined the term positive work environment (PWE) to describe the nature of organizational climate and culture needed to facilitate employee flourishing (see also Härtel and Ashkanasy, 2011. According to Härtel (2008), employees in a PWE view their organization to be ‘respectful, inclusive and psychologically safe; leaders and coworkers as trustworthy, fair and open to diversity; and characterized by ethical policies and decision-making’ (p 584).

The question that arises at this point is how do PWEs come about? Fujimoto, Härtel, and Panipucci (2005) argue that it comes down to leadership and development of human resource management (HRM) practices that result in a healthy organizational culture and a PWE (see also Dutton and Ragins, 2017). In an empirical test of this notion, Fujimoto and her colleagues found that HRM policies and practices underlie employees’ individual and collective positive (versus negative) attitudes to diversity. Building upon this work, Ashkanasy et al (2020) argue that HRM policies and practices play a key role in facilitating a PWE via managing and monitoring the affective experiences of employees, and especially through ensuring that managers are appropriately educated and trained in this regard. Ashkanasy and his colleagues conclude (p 379) this this is achieved via, ‘facilitating positive workplace relationships’ (Krzeminska, Lim, and Härtel, 2018), constructive conflict management (Ayoko and Härtel, 2002), trust (Kimberley and Härtel, 2007), diversity openness (Härtel and Fujimoto, 2000), and organizational justice (Kimberley and Härtel, 2007).

Turning now to consider the effects of climate and culture on employees’ proactive behaviour, and consistent with the position adopted throughout this chapter, it follows that a PWE is a prerequisite – over the longer term – for a climate and culture of proactivity. In this regard, Erkutlu (2012) found in a study of Turkish banking organizations that a positive culture facilitated transfer of shared leadership into employee proactive behaviour that relate, in turn to improved individual and organizational productivity and performance. This result confirms the conclusions reached by Thomas, Whitman, and Viswesvaran (2010) in a meta-analysis: that organizational proactivity links to higher organizational performance.
Finally, as Shirom (2011, p 50) found, a PWE is likely to be associated with a ‘vigorous organization’, whose managerial apex effectively creates the conditions that generate, maintain, and foster employee (positive affect and) vigour throughout the organization. Such organizational level affective energetic resources should in turn mobilize proactivity across the organization and thereby help to achieve organizational effectiveness.

**Summary of the five levels**

In this chapter so far, I have addressed the relationship between emotions and proactive behaviour at each of the five levels set out by Ashkanasy (2003) in the FLMEW. At Level 1 (within-person temporal variability), based on Weiss and Cropanzano’s (1996) AET, I argued that proactive behaviour can be either affect-driven or judgement-driven. The former is usually in response to a stressful event, where the employee needs proactively to find a solution to a (negative-affect inducing) problem. Over the longer term, however, and as Fritz and Sonnentag (2002) found, accumulating positive affect is a prerequisite to develop the positive attitudes that underlie proactive behaviour. At Level 2 (between-person individual differences), key variables relating to proactive behaviour include (positive) trait affect, emotional intelligence and, especially, proactive personality, which represents a generalized tendency to engage in proactive behaviour leading to improved chances of career success (Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer, 1999) and improved job performance (Thompson, 2005). At Level 3 (interpersonal), the focus shifts to interpersonal emotional exchanges and communication of emotion. In this regard, Randolph and Dahling (2013) found that proactivity is associated with employees’ willingness to display emotions consistent with the organization’s display rules. I argue further that proactive employees would be likely to take the lead when ‘co-regulating’ emotions with other parties (Troth et al, 2018).

Levels 4 (groups) and 5 (organization-wide) in the FLMEW refer to collectives within organizations. At Level 4, the focus is on groups and teams, and especially leadership. In this regard, leaders, play a central role in setting a positive affective tone of the group (Sy, Côté, and Saavedra, 2005) leading to reduced stress and enhanced psychological capital (Krzeminska, Lim, and Härtel, 2018). Moreover, research has found that an ‘emotionally intelligent group’ tends to be more psychologically adjusted (Druskat and Wolff, 2001) and to perform better (Jordan et al, 2002; Offermann et al, 2004) than other groups. Moreover, members of groups possessing positive affective tone tend
to be more committed (Youssef and Luthans, 2007) and proactive (Loi et al, 2016). A similar scenario plays out when the organization is considered as a whole, in that a positive work environment tends to be associated with proactivity both as a fact of organizational climate (in the short term) and culture (over the longer term) resulting in turn in higher organizational performance.

A multilevel model of emotions and proactivity

Figure 3.1 shows how the FLMEW can be adapted to reflect proactivity at each of the five levels, based in the foregoing arguments. It is important to note, however, that the levels in the FLMEW do not act completely independently; and nor are they static. Instead, and as Ashkanasy and Dorris (2017) stress, processes within model are inherently interactive and dynamic. In the following, I discuss each of these characteristics in turn.

Figure 3.1: A five-level model of emotions and proactivity in organizations
The dynamic nature of the FLMEW

In fact, dynamism is apparent across all five levels in the model. At Level 1, for example, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) introduced the idea of affective events theory (at Level 1) specifically to deal with the ephemeral nature of emotions and affect (that had previously hindered research on emotions in the workplace, see Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995).

Ashkanasy and Härtel (2014) take this idea a step further and extend it to Level 5 (the organization as a whole). Thus, these authors argue that, just as affect varies moment-by-moment and day-by-day at Level 1, affective climate can likewise be variable (even when the organization’s culture is conducive to a PWE). Thus, despite an organization’s overall positive leadership and HRM policies, its members can still experience setbacks that result in stress and (state) negativity from time to time. In this instance, a positive culture and a PWE is important to ensure resilience during setbacks. In this case, and as Härtel and Ganegoda (2008) note, organizational leaders in PWEs provide positive support to organizational members in order to minimize the effects of negativity and consequent destructive behaviours during difficult periods, resulting in what Shirom (2011, p 50) refers to as a ‘vigorous organization’.

With regard to proactive behaviour, an important corollary of this line of argument is that proactive behaviour is not necessarily always associated with positivity. Sometimes, especially during difficult times (for example, having to deal with a pandemic such COVID-19), employees need to engage in proactive behaviour turn the situation around. I alluded to this in my earlier discussion of Level 1, when I cited work by Fritz and Sonnentag (2009) showing that adversity and time pressure can results in (affect-driven) proactive behaviour. A similar pattern was reported by To et al (2012; To, Fisher, and Ashkanasy, 2015) in relation to ‘creative effort’ (a sister construct to proactivity, see Kim, Hon, and Crant, 2009). These authors found that, while positivity (Isen, Daubman, and Nowicki, 1987) usually facilitates creative effort, the reverse is true on other occasions (depending upon circumstances). For example, sometimes creativity (or proactivity) is necessary to solve a particularly stressful problem.

The interactive nature of the FLMEW

Ashkanasy (2003; see also Ashkanasy and Dorris, 2017; Ashkanasy and Humphrey, 2011a) stress that processes and emotions at each level interact with each other in a complex fashion. Thus, while
theorizing at Level 1 is based in AET and is intended to describe the nature and effects of moment-by-moment emotion in individual employees, it nonetheless incorporates processes at Levels 2 (individual differences) and 3 (interpersonal communication), as well as situational moderators at Levels 4 (groups and teams) and 5 (organizational climate and culture). Thus, Parker et al. (2010) showed that proactive states (at Level 1) are a function of individual differences (at Level 2) and contextual variables (at Levels 4 and 5). Similarly, at Level 2, Li, Liang, and Crant (2010) found that the effect of proactivity is also contingent upon the quality of leader–member relationships (at Level 4) and a positive organizational climate (at Level 5). At Level 3, Randolph and Dahling (2013) found that proactive behaviours depended upon trait proactivity (at Level 2) and organizational display rules (at Level 5). Finally, in his model explaining how negative emotions (anger and fear) can sometimes lead to proactive behaviour via emotional regulation (at Level 3), Lebel (2017) includes the moderating effects of leader support (at Level 4) and identification with the organization (at Level 5).

**Future research**

In this chapter, I have sought to outline research on emotions and proactivity in organizations within the framework of Ashkanasy’s (2003) FLMEW. Readers would have noticed, however, that while I detail some excellent examples of proactivity research that has considered the effects of emotion at each of the five levels in the model, all said and done, it is really pretty sparse, suggesting that this may be an especially fruitful area for future research.

At Level 1 (within-person), scope remains for researchers to examine proactivity as a phenomenon that, like job satisfaction and performance, is likely to vary from moment to moment, and day to day within the work environment. For example, similar to Minbashian, Wood, and Beckmann (2010), who found that conscientiousness – normally considered a stable personality characteristic – can vary depending on the nature of the task, proactivity might also vary in response to an employees’ affective reactions to particular tasks.

At Level 2 (between persons), I focused on proactive personality as an individual difference variable, which researchers have found across many studies relates positively to organizational outcomes and, in particular, acts as a catalyst for positive outcomes (for example, see Chung–Yan and Butler, 2011; Parker and Sprigg, 1999). Like other individual differences, however, proactive personality can have its downsides. For example, Sun and van Emmerik (2015) found that
supervisors rate proactive employees negatively if their proactivity is seen to be political. Clearly there is scope for further investigation into the affective consequences of such ‘political proactivity’.

The notion of political proactivity might also carry over to Level 3 (interpersonal relationships), in which case it is conceivable that a proactive individual might seek to project a particular (advantageous) emotional expression in order to curry favour with another. In view of Randloph and Dahling’s (2013) finding that trait proactive individuals tend to be more eager than others to engage in emotional labour, the idea that this will affect interpersonal relationships in the workplace seems worth pursuing further.

At the team level of analysis (Level 4), one idea that may be worthy of additional research is whether proactivity might be associated with team ‘risky shift’, whereby team members tend to adopt a more risky position than the team’s members would by themselves. While this phenomenon is traditionally cast as a rational response (for example, see Burnstein et al, 1971), more recent evidence (for example, see Lerner et al, 2015) suggests it is quintessentially affective. Given what we know about the relationship between group proactivity and positive affect (compare Fritz and Sonnentag, 2009), it would seem worthwhile to investigate the notion that group proactivity might lead to increased risky behaviour in teams.

Finally, at Level 5 (the organization), I earlier discussed the idea that a PWE is likely to be associated with a ‘vigorous organization’ (Shirom, 2011) resulting in employees capitalizing on their proactivity to maximize organizational effectiveness. In view of research showing a link between proactivity and entrepreneurship (for example, see Crant, 1996), this sets up the intriguing possibility that a PWE is likely to result in a more entrepreneurial organizational culture though promotion of a proactive organizational climate. Similarly, a high PWE organization can be expected to have greater resilience in the face of difficult environmental conditions, such as were experienced in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The notion that proactive behaviour in organizations can be framed across levels of analysis presents some additional intriguing ideas for future research. This is especially so if the dynamic interactive nature of processes with the model are considered. Thus, while Parker and Bindle and their colleagues (Bindl and Parker, 2010; Parker, Bindl, and Strauss, 2010) outline a model of proactive behaviour in individuals (Level 1), teams (Level 4), and the organization (Level 5), there remains scope to study the specific processes of how this occurs with the framework of the FLMEW. One facet in particular that proactivity
researchers have yet to explore in detail pertains to Level 3 (perceiving and communicating emotion in interpersonal relationships). While Randolph and Dahling (2013) have made a promising start in this regard, we still need to do more work to understand the nexus of proactivity and interpersonal emotion regulation, especially as they relate to the (relatively recent) notions of co-occurring emotional regulation and interpersonal co-regulation (Troth et al., 2018).

A further possibility for future research would be to test if the findings of To et al. (2012; see also To, Fisher, and Ashkanasy, 2015) regarding the personal (Level 2) and situational (Levels 4 and 5) conditions under which employees are inclined to behave proactively. To and his associates studied creative effort. While related to proactivity (for example, see Gong et al., 2012), creative effort is nonetheless a distinct construct, and it will take additional research to determine if the interactions To and his colleagues found would apply to proactive behaviour.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have endeavoured to map the literature on emotions and proactive behaviour onto Ashkanasy’s (2003) five-level model of emotions in the workplace. The model begins at the level of within-person temporal variations in emotions, attitudes, and behaviour; and then proceeds through higher levels of analysis including individual differences, interpersonal communication and perceptions of emotion in relationships, and emotions in groups and teams, to deal ultimately with the organization as a whole. The model is both dynamic and interactive. Emotions, behaviours, and attitudes at each of the five levels can vary moment by moment or day by day and intricately relate to corresponding variables across every level of model.

Across the model, I argue that proactive behaviours tend to be associated with positivity, and especially a positive work environment (PWE, Härtel, 2008). At the same time, however, I acknowledge that proactivity is sometimes required to deal with stressful situations involving time pressure. Over the long haul, however, like creativity in general, proactivity tends to be associated with positive organizational cultures that stem in turn from positive leadership and HRM policies.

References


