

Exploring the Job Carving Process for Individuals with Disabilities:
A Thematic Analysis of the Facilitators and Hindrances

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Abstract

Individuals with disabilities continue to face barriers to employment compared to individuals without disabilities. One approach to promoting their participation in the labor market is job carving, a process that assists individuals with disabilities in gaining meaningful employment. The present study investigates the conditions that enable or constrain a successful job carving process. To this end, three focus groups and 19 in-depth interviews were conducted with participants knowledgeable of the job carving process, employment specialists and employer representatives. Thematic analysis revealed six facilitators, namely the importance of adopting a strength-centric approach, valuing and involving the individual with disabilities, internal support, communication and trust between the parties, and the use of creative practices. Four hindrances were also uncovered, namely, lack of awareness, rigidity of systems, breakdown in communication, and employer stressors. Findings are discussed in the context of theories of proactive job design, notably job crafting and idiosyncratic deals.

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Exploring the Job Carving Process for Individuals with Disabilities: A Thematic Analysis of the Facilitators and Hindrances

It is estimated that 1 billion people, 15% of the world's population, are living with a disability (World Health Organization [WHO], 2016). The Canadian Survey on Disability reports that approximately 3.8 million adult Canadians, equivalent of 13.7% of the adult population, are affected in their daily activities as a result of a disability (Statistics Canada, 2013). The number of individuals with disabilities is projected to rise as a result of the ageing population and greater chronic health conditions (WHO, 2011). Indeed, it is likely that the majority of individuals will be limited, either temporarily or permanently, by a disability at some point during their lifetime (WHO, 2011). As such, disability is not restricted to a specific population but rather is a universal human experience (WHO, 2002).

While many individuals with disabilities participate in the labor market and have successful careers (Jans, Kaye, & Jones, 2012; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014; Turcotte, 2014), as a group, individuals with disabilities encounter more obstacles to gaining employment and developing their careers compared to those without disabilities (Baldrige, Beatty, Böhm, Kulkarni, & Moore, 2015; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). This finding is problematic because work is considered an important aspect of life that fulfills universal human needs such as the ability to earn a living, develop a time structure, foster social contacts, experience collective goals and purposes, define personal status and identity, and engage in regular activity (Jahoda, 1981; Paul, Geithner, & Moser, 2009). Unemployment denies individuals with disabilities the benefits of work while the barriers to career advancement can stifle their opportunity to reach their full potential at work (Stone & Colella, 1996). In turn, organizations and society are without these individuals' talents and contributions (Lengnick-Hall, Gaunt, & Kulkarni, 2008; Turcotte,

2014). Much is known regarding the various barriers individuals with disabilities encounter to employment but less is known regarding the processes that lead to successful employment in quality and meaningful positions. Two related strategies that have expanded employment opportunities and have assisted individuals with disabilities in obtaining meaningful employment are supported employment and customized employment (Riesen, Morgan, & Griffin, 2015).

The customized employment process, a development of supported employment (Wehman, Brooke, Lau, & Targett, 2013), has largely been conducted through pilot projects and other small-scale projects (Smith et al., 2015). This observation applies clearly to job carving, a form of customized employment. While job carving service providers see the benefits of carved employment, there is a need for more rigorous research to better understand the role job carving employment plays in providing quality employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Moreover, due to a lack of rigor in the methodologies, the results of these projects have not been able to establish the job carving process as evidence-based.

Job carving is a process that reassigns certain aspects of an existing job to modify or create a new position tailored to the unique skills and talents of the individual with disabilities to meet the needs of the individual as well as increase business efficiency (Griffin & Targett, 2001). It is a concept discussed in the field of rehabilitation but it is less known within the fields of industrial-organizational psychology and human resource management/organizational behavior (hereafter IOOB). As job carving is a means to improving the quantity and quality of employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities (Office of Disability Employment Policy [ODEP], n.d.-a), and the hiring of a productive worker for organizations, it is of great importance to the field of IOOB to explore the process of job carving to reduce the employment inequities encountered by individuals with disabilities and increase their participation in the workforce. The

present work aims to explore the job carving process for individuals with disabilities. In this thesis, I employ a qualitative methodology to better understand what makes for successful job carving experiences from the perspective of the members of organizations whose mission is to assist individuals with disabilities find meaningful employment, and company representatives who have hired individuals with disabilities through job carving initiatives. In doing so, my aim is to gather the lived experiences of the two parties, employment specialists and employer representatives, who have been on either end of the job carving negotiation process and to develop an organizing framework to better understand the facilitators and hindrances of job carving. More specifically, in this thesis, I uncover the conditions that support or detract from a successful job carving process and outcome.

To explore the importance of conducting the present study and to place the study in context, I will begin by defining disability followed by a review of the employment landscape for individuals with disabilities. I will then provide an overview of supported employment, customized employment and job carving. I will then review three job design theories, which can provide a theoretical context for the job carving process, and its facilitators and hindrances. Finally, I will provide an overview of the present study and my research questions.

Defining Disability

There are numerous approaches to defining disability but a prominent definition originates from the WHO's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework. The ICF defines disability as:

An umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions.

Disability is the interaction between individuals with a health condition (e.g. cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and depression) and personal and environmental factors (e.g. negative

attitudes, inaccessible transportation and public buildings, and limited social supports).

(WHO, 2016, para. 1)

The ICF approaches disability from a biopsychosocial model. This model integrates the contrasting medical and social models of disability (WHO, 2002), which are two prominent conceptualizations of disability (Colella & Bruyère, 2011). The medical model views disability as an impairment of the individual directly caused by disease, trauma or a health condition in which medical treatment is required to care for the disability (WHO, 2002). In contrast, the social model views the social environment as disabling and unaccommodating towards individuals with specific conditions (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; WHO, 2002). The ICF emphasizes the need to consider and integrate both models to understand that disability is the interaction between the features of an individual's body as well as the features of their environment (WHO, 2002). Seeing disability as an interaction between the individual and his or her environment rejects the idea that disability is solely an attribute of an individual (WHO, 2011).

The ICF uses three inter-connected categories to classify problems with human functioning: impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions (WHO, 2011). Impairments are “problems in body function or alterations in body structure” (i.e., blindness); activity limitations refer to “difficulties in executing activities” (i.e., walking); and, participation restrictions are considered barriers to involvement in any area of life (i.e., experiencing discrimination in employment practices; WHO, 2011, p. 5). Disability refers to the difficulties encountered in any or all three categories. The ICF's definition of disability is universal as it does not distinguish between cause or type of disability but rather sees human functioning and disability as a continuum. Health conditions are differentiated from impairments in that health

conditions refer to diseases, injuries, and disorders whereas impairments are often recognized as the signs and symptoms of health conditions.

The ICF emphasizes the role environmental factors have on the extent and experience of disability. Environmental factors can create barriers to individuals' access to inclusion and participation (i.e., an individual with a mobility disability in a building without an elevator) and can also affect health conditions (i.e., poor water and sanitation exacerbates health conditions). The ICF also recognizes the effect personal factors (i.e., motivation, self-esteem) may have on individuals' level of participation (WHO, 2011).

For the purpose of this thesis, I adopt the ICF view of disability as an interaction between an individual's health conditions and environmental and personal factors. The ICF perspective aligns with the person-environment interface of the present research (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Su, Murdock, & Rounds, 2015).

The Employment Landscape for Individuals with Disabilities

Despite the passage of legislation promoting equal rights for individuals with disabilities in Canada, the United States, and in many countries around the world (e.g., Canada's Employment Equity Act of 1995; United States' Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; United Kingdom's Equality Act of 2010), individuals with disabilities continue to face employment inequity compared to individuals without disabilities (Colella & Bruyère, 2011). Individuals with disabilities are less likely to be employed, despite their desire to work, for reasons unrelated to their disability (Ali, Schur, & Blanck, 2011; Lindsay, 2011; Turcotte, 2014). Indeed, the employment rates for individuals with and without disabilities are strikingly different. In 2011, the employment rate for Canadians with disabilities, aged 25-64, was 49% compared to an employment rate of 79% for Canadians without disabilities (Turcotte, 2014). The severity of the

disability affects employment rates such that individuals with more severe disabilities have lower employment rates (Turcotte, 2014). Specifically, individuals aged 25-64 with a mild disability had an employment rate of 68% compared to an employment rate of 54% for those with a moderate disability, individuals with a severe disability had an employment rate of 42%, and those with a very severe disability had an employment rate of 26% (Turcotte, 2014). These patterns of unemployment are similar to those found in the United States (e.g., Lauer & Houtenville, 2017; Procknow & Rocco, 2016).

When employed, individuals with disabilities are more likely to be underemployed, have lower workplace earnings and face more career advancement barriers compared to individuals without disabilities (Ameri et al., 2015; Gunderson & Lee, 2016; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014; Maroto & Pettinicchio, 2014). Even when equating education levels and years of experience, individuals with disabilities have fewer opportunities for career advancement compared to those without disabilities (Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, Haslam, & Rabinovich, 2008).

Workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities. The extant literature cites numerous reasons as to why employers do not hire or retain individuals with disabilities. Such reasons include employers' stereotypes about individuals with disabilities' job performance and assumptions surrounding the cost of employing individuals with disabilities (Kaye, Jans, & Jones, 2011; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008; Nota, Santilli, Ginervra, & Soresi, 2014). Employers may believe individuals with disabilities are more prone to absenteeism, are less committed to their work and are less capable of performing essential job tasks relative to individuals without disabilities (Kaye et al., 2011; Shier, Graham, & Jones, 2009; Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2008). Employers may also be hesitant towards hiring individuals with disabilities because of cost-related apprehensions (Peck & Kirkbridge, 2001; Turcotte, 2014). They may perceive additional

expenses are needed to provide reasonable accommodations or extra support and supervision for individuals with disabilities (Kaye et al., 2011). In addition, employers may believe that there is an increased risk for individuals with disabilities injuring themselves on the job (Kaye et al., 2011; R. L. Morgan & Alexander, 2005). Employers may also assume coworkers and customers who interact with an individual with disabilities will experience social discomfort (Feldman, 2004; Kaye et al., 2011; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008; Louvet, 2007). Finally, coworkers may perceive procedural and distributive injustice regarding the accommodations and supports individuals with disabilities receive (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014; Paetzold et al., 2008).

Such assumptions lead employers to believe that there is a greater risk in hiring individuals with disabilities in comparison to individuals without disabilities (Peck & Kirkbridge, 2001; Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2008). However, these doubts are generally unfounded, as it has been shown that individuals with disabilities are hardworking and loyal employees who can have very successful careers (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014; Lysaght, Ouellette-Kuntz, & Lin, 2012), they do not have a higher turnover or absenteeism rate than individuals without disabilities and their job performance is equivalent if not higher than those without disabilities (Kaletta, Binks, & Robinson, 2012; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008; Stone & Colella, 1996). In addition, the cost of accommodation is generally inexpensive, with a recent report from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN; 2016) indicating that almost 60% of accommodations cost nothing, while the rest generally have a one-time cost of \$500. The organization can also benefit from accommodating individuals with disabilities through increased productivity and retention of the experienced employee (JAN, 2016) as well as through the positive effect accommodations can have on coworkers if the accommodation is extended to all employees, thus improving all employees' performance and morale (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; JAN, 2016; Schur et al., 2014).

The glass ceiling and the glass cliff are two metaphors used to illustrate the career advancement barriers individuals with disabilities face once employed (Kulich, 2014). The glass ceiling was originally coined to describe the discriminatory barriers women encounter when attempting to gain leadership positions. Today, the metaphor has been extended to describe the invisible barrier that limits access to career advancement for any marginalized group, such as individuals with disabilities. The individuals with disabilities that break through the glass ceiling to obtain leadership positions face another discriminatory barrier; that is, the glass cliff (Wilson-Kovacks et al., 2008). The main characteristic of a glass cliff position is its precariousness and related risk of failure. Individuals with disabilities who develop or acquire a disability while holding leadership positions experience the glass cliff and precariousness with a greater risk of failing to achieve one's potential (e.g., a lack of opportunity to take risks; a lack of opportunity to have one's abilities and potential recognized). There are parallels between the precariousness and barriers marginalized groups (e.g., women) encounter when holding leadership positions and that of individuals with disabilities in higher level positions, including a lack of support, a lack of resources, and a lack of time to carry out tasks (Ryan, Haslam, Hersby, Kulich, & Atkins, 2007; Wilson-Kovacks et al., 2008).

These barriers restrict individuals with disabilities access to successful employment outcomes. However, supported employment and customized employment are two related strategies that provide individuals with disabilities assistance in gaining and maintaining meaningful and competitive employment (Wehman et al., 2013).

Supported Employment

Although work is an important activity for individuals with disabilities, simply being employed is not sufficient (Vornholt, Uitdewilligen, & Nijhuis, 2013). It is critical that the work

is meaningful. Finding meaningful employment is the goal of supported employment (Wehman et al., 2013). Meaningful employment ensures individuals with disabilities receive equitable treatment in how they are supervised and compensated, have opportunities to interact and work with coworkers, and have access to career advancement opportunities (Wehman et al., 2013). Originally developed for individuals living with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities, supported employment's target population has expanded to assist all individuals with significant disabilities who require ongoing supports and who have a limited or intermittent employment history. Individuals with "significant" disabilities are individuals who require the most assistance in successfully attaining employment (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). The assumption is that regardless of disability severity or type, individuals with disabilities have the capability to participate in supported employment (Wehman & Kregel, 1992).

Prior to the development of supported employment, the approach towards employment for individuals with disabilities was to teach the skills needed for them to become "ready to work" before entering the labor market (Wehman et al., 2013). Individuals with disabilities were situated in nonintegrated settings such as adult activity centers, day treatment programs, and sheltered workshops but eventually the approach received criticism. The guiding philosophy that individuals with disabilities are able to be, and should be, employed in regular business settings, emerged as a response. In the 1980s, legislation in the United States referenced supported employment thereby making it a part of the rehabilitation terminology. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 in the United States was the first legislation that provided funding for supported employment spurring employment support agencies to set up supported employment programs to support the advancement of individuals with disabilities.

Similar to the United States, Canada has used supported employment initiatives as a replacement for the traditional day treatment programs and sheltered workshops across provinces and territories (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001). Supported employment has been evident in Canada for the past 20 years and remains a promising initiative (Prince, 2016).

The key features of supported employment are integrated work settings, competitive employment, and ongoing support services (Wehman & Kregel, 1992). By specifying that individuals with disabilities work in integrated work settings, individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to be employed in typical business settings, in which they work alongside coworkers without disabilities and interact with individuals outside of supported employment (Wehman et al., 2013). This ensures their employment experiences correspond with the employment experiences of their coworkers without disabilities. Competitive employment refers to work that is either part- or full-time employment found within the local labor market in which wages and benefits are equivalent to coworkers employed in the same or similar positions (Wehman et al., 2013). Ongoing support services is a component unique to supported employment compared to other service models. It ensures individuals with disabilities receive long-term supports throughout their job tenure to assist with employment retention. Ongoing support can take several possible forms, including systematic instruction and orientation training to learn how to do the job, compensatory strategies and mentoring to assist with completing the job, and assistance in addressing work-related issues (Wehman, Brooke, & Inge, 2001). The level and type of supports provided to the employee is dependent on each individual and employment situation and the frequency and type of supports can change throughout the individual's job tenure (Wehman et al., 2013).

Customized Employment

A development of supported employment is customized employment (Wehman et al., 2013). Customized employment is a flexible process that engages one job seeker and one employer at a time to design an employment relationship that meets the needs and benefits both parties (ODEP, n.d.-a). Introduced in 2002 by the United States Department of Labor, customized employment is defined as:

Individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. It may include employment developed through job carving, self-employment or entrepreneurial initiatives, or other job development or restructuring strategies that result in job responsibilities being customized and individually negotiated to fit the needs of individuals with a disability. Customized employment assumes the provision of reasonable accommodations and supports necessary for the individual to perform the functions of a job that is individually negotiated and developed. (Federal Register, June 26, 2002, Vol. 67, No. 123, pp. 43149-54)

Customized employment is considered an evolution and improvement of supported employment as it builds on supported employment strategies (Griffin, Hammis, Geary, & Sullivan, 2008). However, the two sets of strategies, and their labels, appear to be used interchangeably in the field. To be true to the terminology in the literature, I will use the term customized employment in the present research as job carving is a form of customized employment.

Customized employment differentiates itself from the traditional job search approach (Wehman et al., 2013). In the traditional job search method, individuals with disabilities are dependent on the local labor market to dictate the available positions (Griffin et al., 2008). However, individuals with disabilities may not be viable candidates for these typical positions found in the labor market (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). As such, the traditional job search approach may be inadequate for individuals with disabilities, as some individuals, especially those living with significant disabilities, often require individualized assistance in determining employment interests, searching for suitable positions, and customizing jobs (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). In contrast to the traditional job search approach, customized employment begins with the individual with disabilities and engages potential employers through interviewing and negotiation to demonstrate the benefits of hiring a specific job seeker (Griffin et al., 2008).

The principal components of customized employment include the discovery process, informational interview process, job development and negotiation, and the implementation of post-employment supports (Harvey, Szoc, Dela Rosa, Pohl, & Jenkins, 2013; Wehman et al., 2013). The discovery process, or the assessment phase, aims to identify the strengths, skills, interests, and goals as well as the support needs of the job seeker in order to develop an individualized profile that guides the entire employment process (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). The vocational profile established through the discovery process differs from one that would emerge from traditional vocational evaluation strategies like psychometric testing (Smith, Dillahunt-Aspillaga, & Kenney, 2015). This is because the vocational profile is developed over a period of weeks and involves observations and interactions in various natural settings such as community environments and paid work experiences as well as meetings with family and

acquaintances (Griffin et al., 2008). This extensive inquiry into the individual reveals the individual's ideal conditions for employment and may also include potential tasks the individual can complete in a prospective workplace (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006; Wehman et al., 2013).

The vocational profile then guides the informational interview process. The informational interview process consists of identifying potential places of employment that would require the talents of the job seeker and match their interests and skills (Wehman et al., 2013). This individualized job search sees the employment specialist, who works for the job seeker, engage with potential employers to determine whether there is a need for an employee to complete any or all of the tasks identified in the job seeker's vocational profile (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). The informational interview process is an exploration of occupational opportunities that suits both the job seeker and employer and thus, there are no pressures or obligations of employment (Griffin et al., 2008).

The employment specialist will then engage in job development and negotiation with prospective employers. This entails negotiating job duties, hours, wages, employer expectations, and other working considerations ensuring the unique needs of the job seeker and the employer are met (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). At times, the employment specialist and an employer will uncover an organization's needs that can then be matched with the needs and skills of the individual with disabilities, thus creating a new and individualized position (Inge, 2007). This negotiation benefits both the individual with a disability as well as the employer. The individual with a disability has a personalized job description that fits their abilities and interests while the employer gains a qualified employee who can perform specific and valued job duties that will make a meaningful contribution to the organization (Inge, 2008).

After job negotiation, individualized post-placement supports are identified with the employer to ensure the job seeker has access to ongoing supports to assist the individual with disabilities in performing job duties, to assist with any issues that may arise (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006) and to monitor the employment relationship to ensure it is continuously meeting the needs of both the employer and the individual with disabilities (Harvey et al., 2013).

Customized employment encourages the use of natural supports – the supports already provided by the employer or those that currently exist in the organization, such as orientation training, peer mentoring, and supervision (Harvey et al., 2013). The level of post-employment supports given is dependent on the individual and can fluctuate throughout the employment relationship. However, the goal is to provide a level of support that promotes independence and employment stability; this indicates that customized employment should not provide more than or less than is necessary for the individual with disabilities to effectively obtain and maintain employment (Wehman et al., 2013).

Customized employment is a flexible process (Harvey et al., 2013). The customized employment process can vary across situations as it is tailored to the interests and goals of the individual with disabilities as well as the specific needs of the employer. The components of customized employment, the tasks within each component and the individuals involved in the process can vary. The components of customized employment can occur simultaneously and thus, do not necessarily occur in a step-wise manner. The way in which the tasks within each component are performed, the sequence of tasks performed, as well as which tasks are completed can be adapted across the customized employment process. In addition, one individual or a team may work with the individual with disabilities.

Customized employment is often a lengthy process but the benefits to customized employment are long-term as the goal is to place and retain individuals with disabilities in meaningful and competitive employment that is aligned with their interests (Wehman et al., 2013). This minimizes the number of individuals with disabilities who cycle through numerous employment relationships that may not necessarily provide meaningful and competitive employment (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006).

Job Carving

One form of customized employment is job carving. There are numerous definitions of job carving with some definitions overlapping with other forms of customized employment. The ODEP defines job carving as modifying an existing job description, which comprises a portion, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description (ODEP, n.d.-b). The ODEP differentiates job carving from other forms of customized employment such as task reassignment, which often takes the form of job creation, and job sharing (ODEP, n.d.-b). Furthermore, the ODEP definition of job carving is similar to Citron et al.'s (2008) definition. These authors also make the distinction between job carving, job creation, job sharing, and job negotiation (Citron et al., 2008). Nietupski and Hamre-Nietupski (2000) define job carving as reassigning job tasks from current employees to create a new job for individuals with disabilities. Job carving is further defined by Griffin and Targett (2001) as the process of breaking down a job to determine the key components that could be successfully performed by individuals with disabilities and then reassigning these components of the job to these individuals. This strategy results in job restructuring or job creation (Griffin & Targett, 2001). The job carving process begins with the discovery process of the individual with disabilities and ends when post-employment supports from the employment specialist are no longer required (Griffin & Targett,

2001). Job carving is a flexible strategy that varies in its' components, procedure, and outcome according to each individual with disabilities. As such, the broadness of its definition reflects this flexibility. Although these definitions may differ to an extent, they all acknowledge that job carving involves customizing a job in a manner that meets the needs and benefits the individual with disabilities as well as the employer (Graff, 2013; Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski, 2000; ODEP, n.d.-b). In this thesis, I adopt Griffin and Targett's (2001) definition of job carving for two reasons: it is the most encompassing definition of job carving, and Griffin has contributed the most on the topic of job carving and customized employment for scholars and practitioners (see Griffin, Hammis, & Geary, 2007; Griffin & Targett, 2001).

It is important that the job carving process does not result in jobs that devalue individuals with disabilities by alienating them from other employees or by having them complete tasks that are unpleasant (Griffin & Targett, 2001). The job duties and responsibilities that are carved out of existing job descriptions must align with the interests, strengths, and skills of the individual with disabilities and take into consideration the levels of support needed (Graff, 2013). Job duties reassigned to individuals with disabilities can be duties taken from existing employees because they detract from their key job functions or areas of expertise or they can be job duties that are best performed by one individual (Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski, 2000). As such, the needs of the employer and the organization are met (Graff, 2013).

Job carving is an effective approach to individualizing jobs for those with disabilities (Griffin et al., 2007). A government-funded project conducted by Nietupski and Hamre-Nietupski (2000) demonstrated a successful job carving process for three individuals with severe disabilities. These individuals had interests in working a clerical position in an office environment (Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski, 2000). The employment specialist observed and

interacted with those close to the three individuals to develop their ideal conditions of employment and individualized vocational profiles. Through discussions with the potential employers and coworkers, the employment specialist identified job duties that could be effectively performed by the individuals. The employment specialist also determined a good employer-employee fit. After a 6-week period, the three individuals were hired in carved positions (Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski, 2000). Through a systematic job carving process, these individuals, with differing interests, strengths, and skills, were matched to different job duties after taking into consideration the needs of the organization and the benefits to the organization's operations (Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski, 2000).

In many ways, job carving can be seen as an approach to job design. Job design has remained a key topic in IOOB for decades as it is a fundamental component of the experience of work (Grant, Fried, & Juillerat, 2011). As such, I discuss three important theories of job design below, with an eye toward understanding job carving from a job design perspective.

Job Design Theory

Job design can be defined as creating and modifying the content, structure, and organization of tasks and activities in ways that benefit both employees and their employer (Grant & Parker, 2009; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). In this way, job carving can be seen as a type of job design given the common goal of ensuring positive outcomes for both employees and employers.

Job design plays a central role in affecting a range of behavioral (e.g., performance, turnover), psychological (e.g., job satisfaction), and physical (e.g., blood pressure) outcomes (Grant & Parker, 2009). Historically, approaches to job design were initiated top-down by management (Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer, & Weigl, 2010). However, in recent years,

contemporary approaches to job design have emerged in which employees play an active role in initiating job design from the bottom-up (Grant et al., 2011). Three theoretical job design frameworks are particularly relevant to job carving. These are the job characteristics model, job crafting, and idiosyncratic deals (i-deals). I discuss each in turn, below.

The job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) remains the dominant model and the most widely-researched approach to job design today (Oldham & Fried, 2016). According to the job characteristics model, there are five core job characteristics that can foster a state of internal work motivation: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Skill variety refers to the extent to which the job requires a variety of different activities, which involves a wide range of different skills and capabilities of the jobholder. Task identity refers to the degree to which the job allows individuals to complete a whole, identifiable, visible piece of work from beginning to end. Task significance refers to the extent to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives of other individuals. Autonomy refers to the degree to which the job provides the jobholder with the freedom, independence, and discretion in how and when to do the work. Feedback is the extent to which the job itself provides the jobholder with information about the performance effectiveness. The job characteristics model proposes that each of these characteristics influence employee attitudinal (e.g., internal motivation, job satisfaction) and behavioral (e.g., attendance, performance) outcomes via its effects on one of three critical psychological states. Skill variety, task identity, and task significance lead to the experienced meaningfulness of work, autonomy contributes to experienced responsibility for work outcomes, and feedback leads to experienced knowledge of the results of the work. An individual is internally motivated to perform well when these three psychological states are present (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Over time, this leads to greater

overall job satisfaction and higher quality work outcomes. A main contribution of the job characteristics model includes acknowledging the importance individual differences has on the relationship between the job characteristics and employee attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Van den Broeck & Parker, 2017). These individual differences include employees' job relevant-skills, knowledge, and ability, as well as their general satisfaction with the work context. In addition, employees' growth need strength, the degree to which employees desire to develop themselves in the context of work, is predicted to moderate the relationship between the job characteristics and employee attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

Both the job characteristics model and job carving approach job design with the goal of aligning employee preferences with aspects of the job and the goal of increasing work efficiency (Griffin & Targett, 2001; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). However, individuals with disabilities who engage in job carving may not require the core job characteristics that the job characteristics model proposes to influence motivation and satisfaction. Job carving breaks down components of the job and assigns individuals with disabilities specific tasks that are aligned with their strengths, interests, and support needs (Griffin & Targett, 2001). As such, skill variety may be a less influential job characteristic on individuals' motivation and satisfaction. Similarly, individuals with disabilities who complete specific tasks and duties may not complete a whole, identifiable piece of work and as such, task identity may also be less influential. The extent that task significance influences individuals' motivation and satisfaction is dependent on the position, which will differ according to the strengths and interests of the individuals with disabilities. However, as customized employment promotes supporting individuals with disabilities towards becoming autonomous and having informed choice and control on the job (Wehman et al., 2013), autonomy would be a relevant job characteristic to individuals with disabilities. In

addition, job carving places individuals with disabilities in positions that are aligned with their skills, strengths, and preferences (Griffin & Targett, 2001) thus, feedback from the job itself would also be important. An important difference between the two approaches may be employees with disabilities' growth needs strength. As job carving is an approach designed for those with significant disabilities (Wehman et al., 2013), most individuals may have low growth needs strength. This in turn may affect how they seek or respond to a challenging task (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). The job characteristics model, like most of the early approaches to job design, is top-down in nature (Oldham & Fried, 2016; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). The job characteristics model gives management the responsibility for designing jobs and imposing job changes on employees. Employees are only involved in the redesign of their own jobs to the extent of providing information about their jobs to management. Management then uses this information to initiate job redesign. In contrast, job carving is a strategy in which the individual and the employer negotiate the work environment, job duties and responsibilities, and other conditions of the job prior to the individual with disabilities starting the job (Citron et al., 2008). In this way, job carving is similar to new perspectives on job design that emphasize the role employees can play in proactively shaping and tailoring their own jobs (Grant et al., 2011). Two approaches to employees shaping their own job designs include job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and i-deals (Rousseau, Ho, & Greenberg, 2006). While job carving is a concept used within the rehabilitation literature, job crafting and i-deals are concepts seen within the IOOB literature. Job crafting and i-deals have certain overlapping features with job carving but also have contrasting features that distinguish all three concepts from each other.

Job crafting describes the process by which employees proactively alter the boundaries of their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). It refers to the physical and cognitive changes an

employee makes to redefine the task and relational boundaries of their job. Employees can change the task boundaries of the job physically by modifying the scope, type or number of work activities and employees can change the task boundaries cognitively by reframing how they view the job. Individuals can revise the relational boundaries of the job by changing their relationships and interactions with others while on the job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting is an activity employed to revise the individual's meaning of work and their work identity by incorporating their motives, strengths, and passions (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). An employee's motives (e.g., enjoyment), strengths (e.g., communication skills), and passions (e.g., teaching) are three personal characteristics that employees use to guide their job crafting efforts (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2013). Any individual can engage in job crafting and can employ incremental or considerable job changes as a way to alter their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). An incremental job alteration can consist of an employee that cognitively crafts one aspect of her job. A mechanic, for example might reframe the duty of answering calls as a way to get to know her customers. A considerable change can consist of an employee that cognitively crafts his job as a whole. A teacher, for instance, might reframe his job as two separate parts: preparing for classroom activities as one part that is not particularly enjoyable, and shaping and helping to develop the lives of students as a particularly meaningful part. Job crafting can also be visible or invisible to employers as individuals may participate in job crafting without managerial approval or knowledge.

Like job crafting, an individual's strengths and desires can guide job carving efforts (Berg et al., 2013; Wehman et al., 2013). Both approaches are bottom-up processes that involve changing and redefining the job; however, the employee shapes and redefines his or her job when job crafting whereas a third party negotiates and redefines the job on behalf of the

individual with disabilities when job carving. Any individual can engage in job crafting with or without managerial approval or knowledge (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) while job carving is a process specific to individuals with disabilities that enhances their employment opportunities and is always negotiated with the employer (Griffin & Targett, 2001). Job carving and job crafting are both creative processes but job crafting is an improvised process whereas job carving is a systematic process (Griffin & Targett, 2001; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In addition, the benefits of job crafting on the organization is situationally dependent whereas a key component of job carving is the benefits it brings to both the individual with disabilities and the organization.

A third relevant theory of job design suggests that employees do not always alter their jobs in isolation from their supervisors. I-deals are special employment terms negotiated between an individual and employer that differ from the employment conditions of coworkers who perform the same job (Rousseau et al., 2006). I-deals benefit both the individual and the employer as it grants the individual a preferred employment condition(s) while the employer attracts or retains a valued employee. These employment arrangements can be negotiated prior to employment, referred to as *ex ante* i-deals, or once an individual is already employed, referred to as *ex post* i-deals. Individuals tend to negotiate i-deals for five reasons or opportunities: development, tasks, flexibility, reduced work, and financial arrangements (Rousseau, Tomprou, & Simosi, 2016). Development-related i-deals entail individuals negotiating conditions such as training and advancement opportunities to attain career goals. Task i-deals consist of negotiating changes to the job content in order to make the work more satisfying or interesting. Flexibility i-deals allow employees to negotiate their preferred schedule and choice of work location. Reduced work i-

deals is a reduction in workload by reducing work hours. Financial i-deals entail negotiating the pay and perks of a position.

Job carving, like i-deals, customizes the employment conditions to benefit both the individual and the employer (Graff, 2013). However, while individuals tend to negotiate the specific terms or the content of i-deals around five kinds of resources (e.g., development, financial arrangements; Rousseau et al., 2016), individuals typically engage in job carving to modify, create or customize the tasks of a job to fit the skills, strengths, and preferences of the individual with disabilities (Griffin & Targett, 2001).

Although job carving has certain overlapping features with the job characteristics model, job crafting, and i-deals, the highlighted differences across their focus, benefits, involved parties, direction, process, and driver demonstrate that job carving is a distinct approach to job design. Importantly, a key distinction is their focus as job carving is a process specific to individuals with disabilities while the other approaches can be applied to any employee. Table 1 summarizes the corresponding and distinguishing elements of job carving with those of the job characteristics model, job crafting, and i-deals.

A variety of contextual elements can influence job design by constraining or enabling the emergence of different job designs (Morgeson, Dierdorff, & Hmurovic, 2010). Such elements can include the organizational climate, technical systems, and the organizational structure. Some work has begun to examine how the organizational context may impact job design, although more work is needed (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). For example, Juillerat (2010) argued that formalization, or a greater reliance on written rules and procedures, should not equate to low job autonomy or simplified work tasks. Briscoe (2007) found that formalization facilitated the coordination of work for professional service workers, specifically primary care physicians. This

constrained task discretion to an extent but increased their ability to control the timing and sequencing of their work tasks.

In the context of job crafting, Leana, Appelbaum, and Shevchuk (2009) found that employees' work discretion was positively related to individual job crafting as well as collaborative job crafting. They also showed that task interdependence and supportive supervision were significantly related to collaborative crafting, but not on individual crafting. Similarly, Dierdorff and Jensen (2018) examined the features of work contexts that enable or constrain job crafting. The authors reviewed how elements of the task and social context of work shaped the curvilinear, U-shaped relationship between job crafting and individual performance effectiveness. Specifically, they tested the moderating, buffering or exacerbating, effects of autonomy and ambiguity as features of an individual's task context, and interdependence and social support as features of social context on the dysfunctional consequences of job crafting. They found high autonomous contexts, low ambiguous contexts, and high social support buffered the dysfunctional consequences of job crafting on performance effectiveness.

Rousseau et al. (2006) noted that the i-deals that employees propose to their employers are more likely to be accepted in startups and in less established organizational settings as the norms, policies, and procedures are less rigid and strict compared to those in more established, bureaucratic, or unionized organizations. They also proposed contextual elements such as the timing of i-deals (e.g., highly skilled and sought-after employees may negotiate for i-deals during certain labor market conditions) and the cultural setting of i-deals (e.g., in Asian countries ex ante negotiations can be considered too assertive) that enable or hinder i-deals.

The research on the contextual elements that enable and constrain the job characteristics model, job crafting, and i-deals can help to inform the facilitators and hindrances to the job carving process, given that the topic has been unexplored in the IOOB literature.

The Present Study

Customized employment is a strategy that can enhance the employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Job carving, a form of customized employment, is a process that reassigns certain features of an existing job to modify or create a new individualized position that meets the needs of the individual with disabilities as well as the needs of the employer (Griffin & Targett, 2001). As there is limited research on the topic within the IOOB field, the objective of the present study is to explore the facilitators and hindrances that enable or constrain the job carving process and outcome for individuals with disabilities from two unique perspectives: employees from employment resource centers, who offer individuals with disabilities support in finding meaningful and paid employment; and, company representatives who have worked with the employment resource centers to hire employees with disabilities through job carving initiatives. In this thesis, I employ a qualitative methodology to answer two research questions: What are the facilitators of the job carving process that support a successful job carving process and outcome as perceived by employees from employment resource centers and by company representatives? What are the hindrances of the job carving process that detract from a successful job carving process and outcome as perceived by employees from employment resource centers and by company representatives?

Method

Employing a qualitative approach is pertinent for my study for two main reasons. First, it provides an in-depth understanding of the job carving process and the facilitators and hindrances

to a successful job carving experience for individuals with disabilities. A facilitator is a condition that enables the job carving process. It can be a person or a thing that makes the process easier and can assist the process in resulting in a successful outcome. A hindrance is a condition that detracts from the job carving process. It can be a person or thing that impedes the process and can restrict the process from becoming a successful outcome. The facilitators and hindrances are gathered from the perspective of participants knowledgeable of job carving. As such, the goal is to capture the experiences of those involved in job carving, from their own points of views, in their own words, and from their own understanding of their experiences with job carving. I was particularly interested in learning from those who have been on either end of the job carving implementation process: employment agency representatives who have placed employees in carved positions, and employers who have hired through job carving. Second, qualitative research is suitable for exploratory research, when there is limited published research on a topic (Myers, 2013). As there is limited research on job carving within IOOB, and within the literature on employees with disabilities in general, a qualitative approach is appropriate.

I relied on two complementary approaches to data collection: focus groups and individual in-depth interviews. Focus groups are useful in exploratory research and can serve as a primary method of data collection (Doody, Slevin, & Taggart, 2013). The interactive nature of focus groups can increase the depth of information generated and can reveal aspects of a specific topic that may not be accessible without the interaction found in a group setting (Doody et al., 2013; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). Focus groups highlight the shared patterns and the differences among participants' views, thereby providing information about the range of perspectives and experiences (Doody et al., 2013). In-depth interviews are extensively relied on in qualitative research to explore a participant's views on a phenomenon of interest (Marshall & Rossman,

1999). Interviews explore in great depth the experiences and opinions of those who have knowledge of or experience with the topic of interest (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). They capture how participants' view their world, how they use terminology, and how they perceive the complexities of their individual experiences (Patton, 2002). By exploring multiple perspectives toward a topic, more thoughtful and nuanced conclusions surrounding the topic can be formed (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Both focus groups and interviews are useful methods to obtain large amounts of data in short periods of time in addition to allowing for immediate follow-up and clarification of the information gathered (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Recruitment and Data Sources

The research team, composed of myself, my advisor, and another faculty member, worked in partnership with an organization whose mission is, in part, to be an employment resource center for individuals with disabilities, and that facilitates inclusive paid employment, among other important initiatives. For the purposes of clarity, I employ the first-person plural to denote tasks that were completed collectively (such as recruitment, focus group facilitation, and focus group data analysis) and the first-person singular to denote tasks that I completed independently (such as interview facilitation and data analysis).

We employed a purposeful sampling approach to recruit participants for the focus groups and in-depth interviews. This entailed selecting information-rich cases that could provide insights to the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002). As such, employees from organizations whose missions include being employment resource centers that offers individuals with disabilities support in finding meaningful and paid employment and company representatives (i.e., owners, Human Resources personnel) who have hired employees with disabilities through the employment resource centers were recruited, as both populations have

experience with the job carving process. Individuals were eligible to participate in the focus groups and interviews conducted with employees from the employment resource centers if they met the inclusion criteria of being an employment counselor at the employment resource centers. Individuals were eligible to participate in the focus group and interviews conducted with company representatives if they were organizational representatives who had hired employees with disabilities through job carving in collaboration with the employment resource centers. All participants needed to have been working with their current organization for at least 6 months, which helped ensure sufficient familiarity with their organization and its practices for the purposes of this study. There were no other exclusion criteria.

Two senior employees at the main partnering organization extended invitations on our behalf to individuals in their organizational peer and client network. The employees at the partnering organization sent invitations to possible participants on behalf of the research team. The invitations included an information letter penned by the researchers, and consent form, so that participants could decide whether they wished to participate. Participants who were interested in participating in the focus groups were invited to one of three focus group meeting dates. Participants who were interested in participating in the individual interviews selected an interview date and time that was convenient for them. Because the focus groups were conducted before the interviews were planned, no focus group participants were invited to participate in the interviews, or vice-versa. All participants received a \$10 coffee gift card as a token of appreciation for participating in the study.

Focus groups and in-depth interviews with participants recruited from two populations were conducted to answer the present study's research questions from two unique perspectives. The purpose of the focus groups and the interviews was to gain a deep understanding of the

facilitators and hindrances to a successful job carving experience for individuals with disabilities from the perspective of participants knowledgeable of job carving.

Focus groups. Participants were segmented into focus groups by whether they were employees of the resource centers or company representatives. Specifically, two focus groups, held with employees from multiple employment resource centers, consisted of five participants and four participants, respectively. These participants have experience guiding individuals with disabilities and employers through the job carving process. The third focus group, consisting of five participants, was conducted with company representatives who have worked with the employment resource centers to hire employees with disabilities through job carving initiatives. In total, 14 participants participated across the three focus groups. Table 2 reports on demographic characteristics of participants in these focus groups.

Separating participants in the focus groups allowed for group homogeneity, which encouraged an open, meaningful discussion among participants (Hennink et al., 2011). Although there was group homogeneity, there was sufficient variation among the participants as they were employed at various organizations and held assorted positions to allow for differing perspectives and experiences. Conducting focus groups with the two populations allowed for the differences among perspectives and experiences to be highlighted and the central themes identified among participants to be captured (Patton, 2002).

There are varying recommendations in the literature regarding the optimal size of a focus group. Recommendations for the appropriate size of a focus group can range from as small as four participants to as large as 12 participants (Doody et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Various authors state the ideal size of a focus group is five to eight participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009), other authors indicate six to eight participants are appropriate (Hennink et al.,

2011), while some authors specify six to 10 participants are ideal (Patton, 2002). However, decisions regarding sample size are also related to additional factors such as the purpose of the study, the complexity of the topic, and participants' level of expertise (Doody et al., 2013; Krueger & Casey, 2009; D. L. Morgan, 1997). Large focus groups, with eight participants, are considered appropriate when the purpose of the study is to pilot-test materials or ideas and when participants may only be able to provide a small amount of information on the topic (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In contrast, small focus groups, with four to six participants, are more appropriate when the topic is complex or sensitive (Doody et al., 2013) and when participants are more passionate and have extensive knowledge or expertise about the topic (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Small focus groups are easier to recruit, moderate, and are more comfortable for participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Given that the purpose of the focus groups was to gain an understanding of participants' experiences and to gather in-depth insights, it was more appropriate to conduct small focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In addition, participants with knowledge and expertise of successful job carving experiences were recruited and it was important that all participants had an opportunity to share their perspectives and experiences.

There is limited advice in the literature regarding the number of focus groups that should be conducted (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011). Some authors provide guidelines for the number of groups necessary to reach saturation. Saturation, often termed data saturation or thematic saturation, refers to the point in data collection where little new information emerges and the data begins to repeat (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). D. L. Morgan (1996) suggests that four to six focus groups are adequate to reach data saturation. In contrast, Krueger and Casey (2009) report the accepted rule of thumb is to plan three or four focus groups with each type of participants. However, the goal of saturation should also be taken in consideration with

pragmatic limitations such as the available time and money (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011; Krueger & Casey 2009). In addition, conducting too many focus groups can be problematic as the researchers are unable to explore and examine the phenomena in-depth (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011). Conducting too many focus groups may also result in an ethical issue whereby data that is collected is not used. As such, the present study conducted three focus groups which allowed us to go in-depth to understand the complexity of phenomena and provide a thick description of the phenomena under investigation (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011).

In-depth interviews. Ten in-depth interviews were conducted with employment agency representatives from multiple organizations. Nine in-depth interviews were conducted with company representatives from multiple organizations. Table 3 reports on demographic characteristics of interview participants. Participants recruited for the in-depth interviews did not participate in the focus groups. Conducting interviews with the two populations also allowed for the differences among perspectives and experiences to be highlighted and the central themes identified among participants to be captured. In addition, conducting a series of interviews with a variety of perspectives increased the confidence in the patterns that emerged (Patton, 2002). Telephone interviews were conducted as they can provide the best source of information when the researcher does not have direct access to participants or participants are geographically diverse (Creswell, 2013; Novick, 2008).

Similarly, to focus groups, there is no agreement on the appropriate sample size when conducting in-depth interviews, and guidelines range from five to 50 participants as being adequate (Dworkin, 2012). However, most scholars argue that the concept of saturation is the guiding principle when determining sample size decisions (Hennink et al., 2017; Mason, 2010). Further supplementary factors can also influence a qualitative sample size, and therefore

saturation. Such considerations include the scope of the study, the nature of the topic, and the quality of the data (Morse, 2000). The size of the scope of the study relates to how quickly saturation can be achieved as the broader the scope of the research question, the longer it will take to reach saturation (Mason, 2010; Morse, 2000). An unfocused topic remains broad in scope and will require more participants to reach saturation. The principle of the nature of the topic relates to how obvious and clear the topic is that is being studied. If the topic of interest is obvious and clear, information is more easily obtained in the interviews and thus, fewer participants are required. In comparison, topics that are more difficult or sensitive to discuss, may require more participants to reach saturation. The quality of the data relates to the richness of the data. If rich information related to the topic of interest is obtained, as opposed to shallow data, fewer participants are required to reach saturation. Other considerations include the resources (e.g., people, time, money) one has for the study (Patton, 2002). As this study is focused in scope, the topic of interest is clear and information can be easily shared in the interviews, and purposeful sampling was employed to obtain information rich cases to provide quality data, saturation can be obtained with a smaller sample size. As such, the present study included 19 interviews which allowed us to seek a range of in-depth experiences to explore the phenomena under investigation (Patton, 2002).

Data Collection

Focus groups. The appropriate university Research Ethics Boards (REB) approved the study. We conducted the focus groups according to best practices (Kruger & Casey 2000; Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996). The focus group facilitator reviewed the consent form with participants and then gathered signed consent forms from each participant prior to the start of the focus group discussion and prior to turning on the digital audio recorders (Appendix A). The lead

facilitator then explained the guidelines for the focus groups with the participants. These guidelines detailed the following points: all participants' views were welcomed and important; all voices were to be heard; the information provided would be attributable as a group and that any identifying markers (i.e., name, position) would be removed from transcripts and replaced by pseudonyms; the information shared and heard was to remain confidential by all participants; and, the focus group discussions were recorded for better data collection purposes only. All participants consented to audio recording, and to this end, two digital audio recorders were turned on (with the second recorder serving as a backup). Discussing that all views were welcomed and important and that all voices were to be heard reminded participants of the value of differing perspectives and alerted participants to the importance of hearing from everyone (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

Focus groups took place in a private and quiet meeting room at an employment resource center in a large, Canadian city. A lead facilitator led all focus groups and a second facilitator assisted with the focus group discussion in addition to taking extensive notes. Data were collected from March to April 2017.

The lead facilitator used a semi-structured interview guide on the following topics: participants' interpretation of job carving; participants' positive job carving experience; participants' ideal job carving scenario; facilitators to successful job carving experiences; hindrances to successful job carving experiences; and, the steps in the job carving process (Appendix B). Each topic was inquired through open-ended questions (e.g., What do you see as the main facilitators of a successful job carving process?). An interview guide is essential when conducting focus groups to ensure the interactions are focused while still allowing individual perspectives and experiences to emerge (Patton, 2002). Focus groups were conducted in a private

room and audio recorded. To facilitate the flow of the discussion, the participants and the two researchers sat around a table. The lead facilitator used a more structured approach to managing group dynamics (D. L. Morgan, 1996), whereby the facilitator ensured that each participant had the opportunity to address each question in the interview guide and encouraged all participants to equally participate in the discussion. Each focus group lasted between 65 and 85 minutes approximately during which there was probing of each participant's perceptions and experiences. Participants completed a short anonymous survey following the focus groups (Appendix C). The purpose of the survey was to gather participants' demographics. Immediately following each focus group, the two facilitators met to discuss and record first impressions from each discussion, main themes of discussion, and their overall assessment of the flow of the conversation. Furthermore, the second facilitator transcribed the notes taken shortly after the focus groups.

In-depth interviews. I conducted the interviews according to best practices (Patton, 2002), and following REB approval of the protocol. I sent the consent forms to each participant by email prior to the interview date, and ensured that I had received the signed consent form from each participant prior to the start of each interview (Appendix D). To ensure informed consent, I reviewed the consent form with participants prior to turning on the digital audio recorders. All participants consented to audio recording, and to this end, two digital audio recorders were turned on (with the second recorder serving as a backup).

Interviews were conducted in a private and quiet room. I conducted all of the interviews in addition to taking notes. Data was collected from November 2017 to February 2018. I used the semi-structured interview guide that was used for the focus groups to guide the interviews (Appendix B). Each topic was inquired through open-ended questions (e.g., What do you see as the main facilitators of a successful job carving process?). Employing open-ended questions

allow participants the opportunity to respond in their own words and to express their own personal perspective (Patton, 2002). Each interview lasted between 18 and 56 minutes approximately, with an average time of 36 minutes. There was probing of the participant's perceptions and experiences during each interview. Participants completed the short anonymous survey to gather participants' demographics following each interview (Appendix C). After each interview, I reviewed the notes made during the interview and reflected on the information that was received. This immediate post-interview review establishes a context for interpreting the interview later (Patton, 2002).

Transcription

A professional transcriber who signed a confidentiality agreement transcribed all focus group interviews and interviews verbatim. This ensured that the focus group discussion and interviews were accurately captured.

Focus groups. Following the focus group transcriptions, a member of the research team, who is not involved in the data collection or analyses, first read the texts carefully all the while listening to the digital audio recordings to ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions. Second, she compared the transcripts to the focus group notes, again to ensure accuracy. Third, she also redacted the texts for the purposes of de-identification. That is, pseudonyms were used to mask the identity of the participants, organizations, or any client referred to during the focus groups. Any potentially identifying phrases in the transcripts were altered to ensure anonymity. Finally, the lead focus group facilitator and I independently listened to the focus group recordings and read the transcripts as a final preparation prior to the analyses.

In-depth interviews. Following the interview transcriptions, I read the texts carefully while listening to the digital audio recordings to ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions. I

redacted the texts for the purposes of de-identification using pseudonyms to mask the identity of the participant, organization, or any client referred to during the interview. Finally, I re-read the transcripts as a final preparation prior to the analyses. Given the accuracy of the focus group transcriptions, I did not enlist the help of an independent reader for the 19 interview transcripts as done for the focus groups.

Data Analysis

NVivo, a qualitative data analysis computer software program, was used to assist with the analysis of data. NVivo is designed to assist in analyzing non-numerical, text-based or multimedia data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). However, the software does not make an analytical contribution in identifying codes or themes (Woolf & Silver, 2017). The advantage to using a specially developed software program designed for qualitative data analysis is that it assists with the mechanical duties of organizing and displaying data (Vaughn et al., 1996; Woolf & Silver, 2017). In addition, it can help to manage large sets of texts, retrieve information from the database relevant to a specific question, as well as visually represent ideas, concepts, timelines, and relationships (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

I employed thematic analysis as the method of data analysis. Thematic analysis can be applied to focus groups, interviews, or a range of texts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is an accessible and flexible method of data analysis used to systematically identify, organize, and report patterns or themes across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). A theme represents a level of patterned response within the data that relates to the particular topic and research question that is being examined (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis examines the patterns of meaning across the data to understand participants' shared meanings and

experiences as opposed to focusing on a single participants' unique and idiosyncratic meaning and experience.

Thematic analysis is a flexible method as it can be conducted in a variety of ways. Themes within the data can be identified in an inductive or deductive manner; themes can be identified at a semantic or latent level; and, thematic analysis can be conducted within a realist/essentialist paradigm or a constructionist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

For the purpose of this thesis, I identified themes through an inductive approach. An inductive approach allows the categories or dimensions of analysis to emerge from the data without presumptions of how the data fits together (Patton, 2002). It is a bottom-up approach, or data-driven approach, to coding and analysis whereby the content of the data drives the coding and analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). An inductive approach codes the data without attempting to fit it into pre-existing codes or the researcher's preconceptions of how the data will fit together (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In contrast, a deductive approach is guided by specific hypotheses based from theoretical frameworks (Patton, 2002). It is a top-down approach, or theory-driven approach, whereby the researcher's preconceived ideas, topics, and theoretical interests drive the coding and analysis. (Braun & Clarke, 2012). A deductive approach tends to provide less rich description of the data overall but rather provides a detailed description of one aspect of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). One cannot be purely inductive, as one brings prior knowledge to the data, or purely deductive, as one cannot ignore the semantic content of the data, but one approach predominates the analysis as the researcher commits to the chosen approach (Braun & Clarke, 2012). With an inductive approach, I read and coded the data without selectively searching for the themes that previous research on the topic or related topics might have identified. To ensure the inductive analysis was a result of the data driving the coding and

analysis rather than my preconceived ideas and concepts, I used various techniques such as testing rival explanations (Patton, 1999) and looking for negative cases (Pratt & Bonaccio, 2016). These strategies increase confidence in the credibility of the data and as such, are explained below in the section related to the quality of the data.

I identified themes at a semantic or explicit level, as opposed to a latent or interpretative level (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes identified through a semantic approach indicates the data is examined at a surface level. As such, themes are identified within the explicit meaning of what the participant has said and the researcher is not searching for anything beyond what was said. The analytic process that follows involves a progression from description, where the data is organized and summarized to show themes in semantic content, to interpretation, where the researcher examines the significance, broader meanings, and implications of the themes in relation to previous literature and theory. This is in contrast to a latent approach whereby meanings beyond what participants have said, such as underlying ideas, assumptions, or conceptualizations are examined. These underlying ideas, broader assumptions, or conceptualizations that are examined are theorized as shaping the semantic content of the data. Thus, the latent approach to the development of themes involves interpretive work of the meaning beyond what the participants actually articulated in the data. Thematic analyses that consider semantic themes tend to be more essentialist/realist. With an essentialist/realist approach, participants' meanings and experiences can be interpreted in a straightforward manner as there is a simple, unidirectional relationship with meanings, experiences and language. In contrast, thematic analyses that consider latent themes tend to be more constructionist. From a constructionist perspective, participants' meanings and experiences are socially produced, thus, thematic analysis examines the sociocultural contexts and conditions around participants'

meanings and experiences. As the aim of this research was to examine the facilitators and hindrances to job carving as perceived by participants, it was important to examine the data within the explicit content of what the participants articulated; thus, I identified themes through an inductive approach, within a semantic approach and within an essentialist/realist paradigm.

Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a guide to conducting thematic analysis that consists of six phases: familiarizing yourself with your data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing the report. One can move back and forth through the phases when needed. As such, the phases do not represent a linear process. The six phases of thematic analysis are described below. Two coders, the lead facilitator of the focus groups and myself were used in the phases of thematic analysis for the three focus groups. One coder, myself, was used in the phases of thematic analysis for the 19 interviews.

In phase one, to familiarize ourselves with the data, we immersed ourselves in the data through repeated and active readings of the transcripts whereby we purposefully searched for meanings and patterns and note initial ideas that can be returned to in subsequent phases. We also checked the transcripts against the original digital audio recordings to further familiarize ourselves with the data. Hearing people's ideas in their own voice can help with interpretation, as intonations are not easily captured by transcriptions.

In phase two, to generate initial codes, we coded interesting features of the data in a systematic manner. Codes are labels used to assign units of meaning to the raw data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes can be assigned to different sized "chunks" of raw data such as words, sentences, or whole paragraphs (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56).

The following phase searches for themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some

level of patterned response or meaning” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). In this phase, we analyzed the codes by considering how they may relate to or combine into main overarching themes and sub-themes. To do this, we gathered all relevant data into their potential themes using visual aids such as tables and thematic maps, as visual representations are useful to conduct in this phase.

Phase four consists of two steps: to review and refine themes. The first stage involves checking the themes at the level of the coded data extracts and exploring whether the themes fit the data. At this stage, we discarded themes, combined themes, separated themes, and changed the boundaries of themes. The data within a theme should be coherently linked, while there should be clear and distinct boundaries between themes. The second stage of the phase involves checking the themes in relation to the entire data set. In this stage, we reread all of the data to determine whether the themes capture the data set and to determine whether any data had been missed in the earlier stages of coding. The goal of this stage is to have the thematic map and a set of themes that capture the relevant and meaningful elements of the data in relation to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

In phase five, we defined and named the themes by clearly stating what is unique about each theme and what aspects of the data each theme represents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes should have a singular focus, not overlap with other themes, and directly address the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The themes should represent an overall story of the data in relation to the research questions. Thus, it is important to consider the themes themselves and how the themes relate to one another. We also selected data extracts that provide a vivid and compelling representation of the themes. We also refined the name of the themes to ensure that they are informative and concise.

The final phase focuses on the final analysis and production of the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The report goes beyond description to provide a compelling story about the data related to the research questions.

Quality of the Study

The standards of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were used to judge the quality of the conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Each standard is discussed in turn, below.

Establishing credibility. Credibility refers to ensuring that the phenomenon under investigation is accurately identified and described (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). To maximize credibility of our findings, we adopted three strategies as discussed by Pratt and Bonaccio (2016) and a technique discussed by Patton (1999). First, credibility is accomplished through in-depth, context-rich (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Miles et al., 2014), and thick descriptions of the phenomenon (Geertz, 1973). Pratt and Bonaccio (2016) encourage authors of qualitative pieces to “show their data through thick descriptions and quotations, both of which aid in establishing the credibility of their results” (p. 710).

Second, member checking is an additional approach that can be used to establish the credibility of the qualitative study (Miles et al., 2014). Member checking refers to receiving feedback from participants regarding some aspect of the findings to ensure the descriptions, explanations and interpretations are accurately captured (Miles et al., 2014). Member checks can be informal and formal, and can be made during data collection and data analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This practice helps to ensure the authenticity dimension of credibility (Golden-Biddle, & Locke, 2007). As such, member checks were made during the focus group discussions and interviews whereby the facilitator summarized participants’ responses providing participants

opportunities to offer additional information or to clarify their responses (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Third, we conducted, throughout our research, “a mental exercise whereby [we] consciously think of what [we] would need to see to disconfirm what [we] think [we] know or believe” (Pratt & Bonaccio, 2016, p. 707). Looking for negative evidence assisted in finding any data that opposes or is inconsistent with preliminary conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). Negative evidence, in the form of themes, examples, or cases, may be exceptions that enforce the conclusions, broaden the conclusions, change the conclusions or cast doubt on the conclusions (Mason, 1996; Patton, 1999).

Closely related to the testing of negative cases is a technique of looking for rival or competing themes and explanations of the data (Patton, 1999). This involved looking for other ways of analyzing the data that may lead to alternative findings after I described the patterns and linkages through inductive analysis. Failure to find strong supporting evidence of alternative findings or explanations helps increase confidence for the original analysis I generated and provides confidence that the analysis is data-driven.

In addition, we adopted certain provisions outlined by Shenton (2004) to further promote the credibility of the findings. First, an early familiarity with the culture of the main partnering organization was developed before data collection. This was achieved via multiple consultations and preliminary visits to the organization by two researchers, the lead facilitator and the second facilitator.

Second, we triangulated via data sources whereby we used a wide range of participants within and across focus groups as well as across interviews. Employees of the employment resource centers were employed at multiple organizations and the company representatives who

have hired individuals with disabilities through the employment resource centers were from various organizations and industries. This allows participants' perspectives and experiences to be verified against others (Shenton, 2004).

Third, we used tactics to promote honesty in the information participants shared during the focus groups. Prior to the start of the focus groups, participants were informed verbally and through the consent form that their participation in the study is completely voluntary and that there would be no negative consequences, within their workplace or elsewhere, of choosing not to participate or leaving at any point during the focus group. Participants were also told that they could stop speaking mid-sentence if they realized that they were about to share information beyond their comfort level. Finally, participants were made aware that everyone's views were welcomed and important. These tactics encourage participants to contribute freely and honestly to the discussions without fear of repercussions (Shenton, 2004).

Establishing transferability. Transferability refers to demonstrating that the findings can be useful, or transferred, to similar contexts (Miles et al., 2014). Some authors argue that determining whether the findings of the present study are transferable to another context rests upon the reader, not the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Miles et al., 2014). To aid the reader in determining the potential transferability, I illustrated in-depth and thick descriptions of the original approach, methodology, analysis and findings (Miles et al., 2014). Specifically, above, I have outlined the number of organizations participating in the study, participant exclusion criteria, the number of participants involved in the research study, the data collection methods employed, the number and length of the focus groups and interviews, and the time period over which the data was collected (Shenton, 2004). In addition, in the discussion, I specified any limitations in the methodology, analysis, and findings (Miles et al., 2014).

Establishing dependability. Dependability attempts to ensure the processes of the study are kept reasonably stable over time and across researchers (Miles et al., 2014). In particular, it is important to check the consistency in coding data between the researchers on a research team (Hennink et al., 2011). To ensure dependability in the present study, we conducted inter-coder agreement checks (Miles et al., 2014). Codes should have clear, operational definitions that can be applied consistently by one researcher over time as well as across multiple researchers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Inter-coder agreement checks refer to the extent that one researcher uses the same codes for the same blocks of data as another researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Two researchers, the lead facilitator of the focus groups and myself, separately coded the same data set. For the focus groups, consensus on coding was reached through discussions with both researchers. For the interviews, I separately coded the full data set and then the second coder separately coded a subset of four interview transcripts. The code definitions were refined through discussions after comparing the two sets of coded transcripts. We established inter-coder agreement at 79%. Inter-coder agreement should reach at least 70% (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and was calculated by dividing the number of agreements by the total number of agreements and disagreements of the highlighted segment for that particular source document. Common reasons for discrepancies in coding are related to unclear code definitions, definitions that are too broad or narrow, duplicate codes, and insufficient training on how to recognize codes in the data (Hennink et al., 2011). Significant variation on coding reveals the definitions of the codes need to be refined or amended (Miles & Huberman, 1994) or further training needs to be conducted (Hennink et al., 2011).

Dependability can also be maximized through explicitly stating the processes of the study so other researchers can conduct the study in the future (Shenton, 2004). Thus, in the present

study, I included sections that detail the research design and implementation, specify how data was collected in the field, and appraised the effectiveness of the study's processes (Shenton, 2004).

Establishing confirmability. Confirmability is the standard related to objectivity (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This refers to whether the research findings are supported by the data and is exempt from the researcher's biases (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). To establish confirmability, the present research detailed the sequence of how the data was collected, processed, condensed, and displayed to reach the findings (Miles et al., 2014). This detailed description will allow readers to have a complete picture of the linkages between the data and the conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). In addition, I was explicit about any personal assumptions, values and biases that may exist and considered competing hypotheses or possible explanations (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Miles et al., 2014). I also explained reasons for adopting specific approaches over alternatives as well as outlined limitations of the chosen techniques (Shenton, 2004).

Results

Analysis of the data revealed 10 themes overall. Six themes pertained to the facilitators to job carving: (a) Adopting a strength-centric approach, (b) valuing and involving the individual with disabilities, (c) presence of internal support within the company, (d) communication between parties, (e) trust in the employment specialist, and (f) engaging in creative practices. Four themes pertained to the hindrances to job carving: (a) Lack of awareness, (b) rigidity of systems, (c) breakdown of communication between parties, and (d) presence of employer stressors.

Figure 1 illustrates an organizing model of the facilitators and hindrances to a successful job carving process. As defined above, the facilitators are the conditions that enable and the hindrances are the conditions that restrict the job carving process captured from the lived experiences of both parties: employment specialists and employer representatives.

Facilitators to Job Carving

Adopting a strength-centric approach. Both employment specialists and employer representatives acknowledged that individuals with disabilities have strengths and a position can be tailored to those strengths. Strengths include individuals' capabilities, skills, and talents. Participants also included the notion of individuals' interests and preferences in their discussion of strengths. As explained below, employment specialists and employer representatives converged on their description of a strength-centric approach. I discuss the employment specialists' results first, followed by the employer representatives' results.

Employment specialists noted the importance of determining the strengths of each individual with disabilities in order to highlight them to employers when negotiating a job for an individual with disabilities. This allows to carve a job that speaks to their strengths: "We sit down and we develop a résumé with [the individual with disabilities] as best as we can, and we focus on their talents and their likes and their aspirations and their dream job" (Rose, employment specialist).¹ Additional supporting quotes of the facilitators to job carving are shown in Table 4.

Maintaining a strength-centric approach shifts the focus from an individual's *disabilities* to their abilities. A strength-centric approach does not ignore or fail to address the challenges or

¹ Participants' names and identifying details in the quoted texts have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the individuals.

weaknesses of the individual. Instead, it acknowledges that supports are required to address the unique needs of the individual. For instance, Alexis, an employment specialist explained,

[Prior to the individual with disabilities joining an organization,] we usually share some information [with anyone who will be working alongside the individual] obviously what the person consents about that person that's going to be joining their team and their disability, and how they could best support that person. It's done from like a strength kind of based perspective.

Employment specialists acknowledged that placing employees in a position that centers around their strengths puts them in a position to succeed and results in positive effects on the organization. As such, the carved position benefits both the individual with disabilities and the employer. For example, Lillian, an employment specialist mentioned,

People getting a different feel when they walk into the organization because it's one where they feel like everyone's included. That kind of feeling rubs off, or even other co-workers, how they might feel if people are valued enough to kind of look at what their skills, their best skills are and to work with them on that.

Moreover, participants discussed that employers can hold a strength-centric approach towards both employees with and without disabilities. Employment specialists noted that employers can have an understanding that their employees have different personalities and possess certain strengths regardless of whether they have a disability or not. Employers have knowledge of the aspects of the job their employees struggle with and as such, should carve the job to better suit the strengths and address the needs of their employees. Jack, an employment specialist, explained that 'good' employers will carve jobs for employees with and without disabilities:

Any good employer will carve jobs for any good employee to be able to maximize [their particular skill set]. I don't think the concept of job carving should be considered exclusively in the realm of folks with intellectual disabilities or autism or any other disability for that matter. I think job carving is a way of life in most good companies. So in some cases employers will say this is the job description, period, end of discussion. [...] But [...] I believe that the good employers are the ones who say this is the job description. Let's try it on for size. Let's see what you do, and when they realize they hired someone for position A but that person is not only capable of position A but parts of position B and parts of position C maybe, then why not maximize the benefit to that employer by building a new job description basically?

These sentiments were echoed by the employer representatives. Employer representatives discussed the importance of looking for the strengths of the individuals with disabilities in order to carve the position to best suit their strengths. Chloe, an employer representative noted,

You look at the strengths and challenges and the needs and loves of individuals with, well, probably any individual, but in our case, individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or autism, and you try to figure out with [that] profile of ability and not, what that would allow them to do, what they would enjoy doing in terms of work based on, you know, what they're good at, what they love, what challenges them, those kinds of things.

Like the employment specialists, employer representatives also acknowledged that a strength-centric approach focuses on abilities in addition to supporting the challenges and needs of the individual:

Each individual has their own unique needs and their own unique abilities. So we as employers have to figure out how do we groom those abilities and support the inabilities that they have to make this a win-win situation for everybody. (Grace, employer representative)

Echoing the thoughts of employment specialists, employer representatives also explained how carving a position to an employee's strengths can benefit the employee as well as the organization through the positive effects. As Melissa, an employer representative discussed:

And so sometimes we presume that oh, okay, well we have to make accommodations or we have to carve off something so that [the employees with disabilities] can manage the task. No. Again, it's carving off the successful parts because my employees will be satisfied. They'll stay longer. They'll do better work if they don't have to do the aspects of their job that they're not successful at. And that's all employees, right, in my opinion.

They also mirrored the concept that a strength-centric approach is used for both employees with and without disabilities as different employees have different strengths and weaknesses and likes and dislikes. Thus, employers may job carve for those with or without disabilities. Furthermore, employer representatives explained that they will reassess the position of the employee if it does not align with the employee's strengths:

We don't really separate in between disabilities and employees who don't have disabilities because it's really the same. All of our employees have always had strengths and weaknesses, and we've always successfully managed. You know, if it's a certain task doesn't fall in the employee's strengths, we try to switch it up. (Noah, employer representative)

Valuing and involving the individual with disabilities. Participants emphasized the need for the individual with disabilities to be involved in the job carving process. This theme was shown by employment specialists when they described how they involved the individual with

disabilities throughout the job carving process. Similarly, employers exemplified this theme by involving the individual with disabilities in the organization's employment practices and functions and treating them with respect. These ideas are described in turn, and, as discussed, involvement and valuing had different characteristics depending on whether the participant was an employment specialist or an employer representative. Nonetheless, all instantiations of this theme reflected value and involvement of the individual with disabilities.

Employment specialists discussed the importance of involving the individual with disabilities in the job carving process. The individual with disabilities should be the source of information that guides the entire job carving process. As such, they are the driver of the process. As Nina, an employment specialist noted,

[A]s a staff, I'm not going to determine what I think is best for [the individual with disabilities'] life, just like I wouldn't tell you what you should do with your life. Like you're an expert in your life and yourself, and they are an expert in their life and their selves.

Employment specialists discussed the need for the individual with disabilities to have the opportunity to make choices concerning employment and the need for their input to be respected. Individuals with disabilities should have some degree of participation in determining the tasks, duties, or position of the carved job as they know their interests and preferences best. Tammy, an employment specialist, explained how the carved position can become unsuccessful if the individual with disabilities is not involved:

I think it's really easy for, you know, support workers in the disability field to just jump ahead and forge ahead and just do things because it's easier, it's faster and not have those conversations with the employee with the disability. [...] Let's say [the employee with disabilities is] working at [a] shoe store and I can say: Oh, yeah, they love working with the

shoes and [...] we're going to set them up in the stock room and not having those conversations [with the employee] to find out, well no, they really like doing displays out in front and dealing with the customers. And they're stuck in the stock room, and they're not happy. [...] and maybe it might reflect in the job performance, and then [the employer will] say, well, [it] is not working out. And you realize that, oh, what their love of shoes was being in the front of the store.

Furthermore, individuals with disabilities can be involved in the job carving process in various ways such as determining how to approach the organization and by participating in the meetings with the employers when negotiating the carved position: “[T]he employee really got to do what they wanted, I think they really felt like they were listened to. You know, they felt like they had value” (Tammy, an employment specialist). The individual with disabilities should also be consulted about how much support they require from the employment specialists during the job carving process. The role of the employment specialists is to provide the appropriate supports and the appropriate amount of supports to the individual with disabilities. For example:

It's a nursing home where we have [an individual with disabilities] who works there. And [the employee with disabilities is] a regular staff [member], and initially we weren't involved directly [with the organization]. We would meet with her after. She didn't want to be known as having a disability. She's very high functioning and able to do her tasks. But over time she appreciated the support. So we'd come in and see her [at the organization]. (Sabrina, employment specialist)

Mirroring the ideas expressed by the employment specialists, employer representatives spoke about the importance of involving the individual with disabilities in the organization's

functions and activities. For example, when employers value individuals with disabilities as employees, they do not differentiate between their employees with and without disabilities:

I was reminded of just an exchange with one of our [employees] here a week or so ago. We were talking about an interview coming up for the people that we have, the disabled people that we have working here. And she said, she looked at me funny and said: “Disabled people?” And it’s really the way that we look at, that we, I guess, come to appreciate the [employees with disabilities] that we have working with us is that they are people just like the rest of us. And it’s strange for any of us to consider them to be disabled. (Scott, employer representative)

Employer representatives discussed how they treat their employees with and without disabilities the same in terms of accommodations, onboarding, mentoring, training, and other organizational practices and policies. As Hailey, an employer represented discussed,

[Setting up the new hire with a buddy] is for all individuals, and that’s again the beauty of, I think, what our hiring practices and onboarding practices are is that regardless of the situation of the person coming in, they’re getting the same level of training, they’re getting the same quality. And when you look at it, there’s not a huge difference from, it’s never really for us, you know, one of those big cavernous differences. It’s like, oh, we need to take it one step to the left, or one step forward.

Employer representatives explained that they provide the same organizational practices and policies to both employees with and without disabilities because they are all part of the organization: “And I had to explain to [the employee with disabilities] those rules are the same for everybody. You need to request your vacation time ahead, not after the fact. We treat everybody the same” (Grace, employer representative). On the other hand, if employers have

different policies and procedures for specific segments of the organization, it treats people differently and creates a separation between the employees with disabilities and the employees without disabilities. As Melissa, an employer representative, noted it has to be for all employees otherwise “it treat[s] people as us and them, and it treats people as different”.

Another manner in which individuals with disabilities were valued and involved was in terms of social events. Specifically, employer representatives discussed how they or the individuals with disabilities’ colleagues involve and integrate the individual with disabilities into the organization through formal and informal social functions: “[O]ne of the guys has been invited to so many potlucks he’s like gaining quite a bit of weight” (Colleen, employer representative).

Employment specialists also explained the importance in the employer representative involving and integrating the individual with disabilities into the social functions:

But it got to the point of [the organization] respected him as an employee and a co-worker. So when they’re having Christmas parties they’re making sure that he’s invited and has a ride. When they’re doing the picnic, the barbeque for the [municipal government] or whatever they’re doing, they were invested in him as a co-worker. (Sabrina, employment specialist)

Presence of internal support within the company. Participants emphasized the importance of having internal support to engage in job carving. Employment specialists explained that internal support for job carving can be encouraged by internal champions, the individuals who see the value in employing individuals with disabilities and encourages job carving initiatives. Employer representatives also noted the importance of internal support. Both ideas are discussed below.

First, employment specialists noted that internal support can stem from the leaders within the organization. Organizational leaders who act as internal champions assist in moving job carving forward and prevent employees who are hesitant towards job carving from impeding the process:

I think that there really needs to be kind of that support [for job carving] from the organization from the top, that it will get the necessary support needed going forward. Because without that it can be tough for things to keep going if there's problems. (Brian, employment specialist)

Internal support for job carving can also stem from employees across positions and authority levels. It is particularly important to identify an internal champion: "We look for the champions in the organization, right? Whether it's the top person, the person on the very bottom level that maybe doesn't have the authority but maybe could start those conversations and plant those seeds" (Lillian, employment specialist).

Furthermore, participants discussed the importance of broad organization buy-in for job carving which fosters the internal support to job carve. Internal champions may spearhead the job carving process, but without buy-in from other employees within the organization, job carving may not be successful. Agreement to support the job carving initiative is needed especially from the colleagues who will be working with the individual with disabilities as well as their supervisors and managers. As Jack, an employment specialist, discussed,

So [it is] great for a general manager of a [multinational retailer] to say, yes, we'll [job carve]. The HR manager has to be on board, and the shift supervisors or the floor supervisors also have to have some comfort in understanding what is autism? What does that mean?

Employer representatives mirrored employment specialists' views on the importance of an internal champion and the effects internal support has on facilitating job carving. Colleen, an

employer representative noted, “We’re a really large employer so it’s important to make sure that we’ve identified a supportive people leader upfront.” Like employment specialists, employer representatives acknowledged internal champions can be employees of varying authority levels:

I mentioned [job carving] to one of my team leaders on the way to a business trip one time.

And two weeks later he says: “Hey, why can’t we do this? Can we start it? When is it going to happen?” And he really put the pressure on me to get this going. (Jordan, employer representative)

Employer representatives also acknowledged the importance of requiring buy-in from others in the organization in order for job carving to be successful. Buy-in demonstrates that employees in the organization have an understanding and are in agreement to support the decision to job carve. When buy-in occurs, employees in the organization are receptive to accepting and including the individual with disabilities as part of the organization: “And we have to have that buy-in from the team that [the employees with disabilities are] part of the team” (Grace, employer representative).

Communication between parties. Communication between parties is essential at all stages of the job carving process to prevent issues that may arise and to resolve issues that have arisen. Communication is needed between the employment specialists and the individual with disabilities, between the employment specialists and the employers, between the employers and their employees who work with the individual with disabilities, and between the employers and the individual with disabilities. I discuss these instantiations of communication in turn below.

Communication between the employment specialist and the individual with disabilities is important at the beginning of the job carving process so the employment specialist can gain an in-depth understanding of the job seeker’s interests, capabilities, employment goals, and support

needs. Communication during the discovery phase is important in order for the employment specialists to find a position that best aligns with the job seeker. Employment specialists explained that to gain a deep understanding of the job seeker, many conversations may need to take place in order to determine which position would be the best fit for the individual with disabilities. Speaking to this idea, Nina, an employment specialist noted,

[I]t's a matter of taking the [individual with disabilities] out for a coffee, having a conversation, and being like, hey, so I understand that you want to work. Tell me what that looks like for you. Paint a picture to me based on your experiences what does that look like, right? And then typically the person will do the "I would like to work at [a multinational fast food chain]", right? Or a great one was someone was like, "I want to be a doctor", right? [...] So you can't always take what someone says at first. [...] you have to take the time to investigate and have further conversations with the person to understand what does that mean? [...] You have to put that time in to figure that out. And then you have the [job seeker say], "Oh, I just wanted to wear a white coat and clean stuff". [...] that's not a doctor at all. But [they] said doctor, I thought something, and [they] actually meant something completely different. So if I didn't take the time to really investigate that then we wouldn't have gotten to this place that we're at now. It's like okay, well now, you want to wear a white coat and clean stuff. Great. So I mean have this conversation, but then I also need to [understand] what are they capable of doing? So physically, how many hours can [they] work for? Are they a morning person? Are they a night person? But you need to really map out all of the assets, the characteristics, everything that this person has and then kind of bring them all together and say, okay, I think that this and this would be a really fantastic job opportunity.

Once the individual with disabilities is placed in a carved position, continued communication with the employment specialist is important in order to address any issues or support needs. This communication can be initiated by the individual with disabilities or established by the employment specialist through regular check-ins: “[D]oing the checkup maybe every month to see how things are going and checking in with the employee [...] that used to be a job seeker. Checking in with them and seeing how things are going from their side” (Tammy, employment specialist).

As a second instantiation of the communication theme, participants discussed the need for communication between the employment specialists and the employer representatives. Both parties highlighted the need for the other party to clearly communicate with them, and vice-versa. For example, the employment specialists require employers to communicate clearly their needs at the beginning of the job carving process. This is essential in order for the employment specialists to find the best candidate for the job or to carve a position that is suitable for an individual with disabilities. Underscoring this point, Matthew, an employment specialist mentioned,

So we had an opportunity with a company, [a natural gas service provider], and when I had a meeting with all the managers, and we were brainstorming as to what’s not being done at the end of the day. I had two or three sheets full of job tasks.

Employment specialists discussed the importance of communicating their expectations for the carved position in terms of hours, pay, and duties to the employers. As one employment specialist, Nina, indicated, “And so I just started one by one going [to] speak with the employers about competitive employment.” Employment specialists also explained the importance of communicating relevant information about the individual with disabilities to the employer when

negotiating a carved position so the employer is aware of the capabilities and support needs of the individual with disabilities:

It is really important to have a good relationship and [to talk] about [the individual with disabilities'] strengths, [so] the employer [doesn't] get surprised if they know what they're getting themselves into and have accommodations made to help the client. So if it is something that the employer thinks is beyond their control then it shouldn't be sprung up unexpectedly. So we talk about certain things, challenges, and the strengths, and if they're ready and willing to get on board with the job, then go from there. (Larissa, employment specialist)

Continued communication between the employment specialist and the employer is also required when the individual with disabilities is employed. Through regular check-ins, employment specialists can inquire about the progress of job carving and employers can communicate any issues or questions they have to the employment specialist. For instance, Rose, an employment specialist noted,

And the staff at the [multinational coffee company] will update the support worker on how [the individual with disabilities] was doing for the two hours on his own, where he needs to improve. And they have like a communication book, like a log note thing that they'll communicate with each other through. Also, for our more independent individuals that have jobs on the weekends, [support] staff will maintain phone contact with the employer. So if the employer had a bit of an issue with the individual on the weekend then they would phone Monday morning and they would talk it through and troubleshoot and figure out what it is to make, you know, the weekend job go smoother. So it's a lot of phone contact. It's a lot of written notes. I mean, there's the odd time that emails will happen. Support staff will go in

and do spot checks if the individual has any kind of employment or half and half, half support and half independent. Staff will go in and do their spot checks, talk to the manager or the supervisor just to see how things are going.

Employer representatives echoed the need for communication between the two parties. Specifically, they rely on employment specialists to communicate relevant information about the individual with disabilities to employers such as, “finding out from either the individual with disabilities and/or one of their supports what their needs are” (Hailey, employer representative). Employer representatives also expect continuous communication with employment specialists to assist employer representatives in the case that any issues arise after the individual with disabilities has been hired. For example,

Because this is my first year hiring through [the Resource Center] and just having to adjust and deal with situations [with the individual with disabilities], so I would go back to [the employment specialists] and say, this is what I’m doing. And they would guide me in the right direction. (Elizabeth, employer representative)

As a third instantiation of the communication theme, employer representatives stressed the importance of communication between the organizational leaders and their employees. This top-down communication is important in fostering buy-in from the employees. Prior to the individual with disabilities beginning their employment, the organization’s leaders need to communicate with their employees that they are engaging in job carving, including any changes that will be occurring, explain what job carving is, and discuss the individual with disabilities that will be joining the organization:

I think what’s made it successful in our company has just been the top-down messaging and the taking the time to explain up front what we’re doing. So not just that our employees would

have support dealing with this going throughout, but making sure they understand what we're doing and why we're doing it kind of before it begins, and helping them see that what we're doing here isn't any different than what we're doing with any of our employees and kind of why we've done it. (Noah, employer representative)

These conversations educate employees on the etiquette and language around job carving and disabilities in addition to breaking down the myths surrounding disabilities. As one employer representative noted,

[The job carving experience] really [opened] up the dialogue because at first it was, you know, there of course were some people who were like, can [the individual with disabilities] make it to the back counter? Like, yes, of course. We interviewed her at the back counter" (Hailey).

As employment specialists are experts on the topics of disability, job carving, and the individual with disabilities, they can assist the organization by speaking to the organization's employees on such topics. These discussions allow the employment specialists and the organization's employees to share information about disabilities and job carving, disclose (with permission) information about the individual with disabilities that will be joining the organization, and discuss how employees can interact and best support the individual with disabilities. Employment specialists stressed the importance that these sessions are open and safe spaces to ensure employees are comfortable inquiring about and discussing the topics. As Matthew, an employment specialist, explained,

[W]e call it a staff address. So before an individual is hired and we talk to the employer, we create a safe space where employers, co-workers, supervisors, managers can have an open, honest, safe conversation about what does it mean, what does it feel like to work with

somebody with a developmental disability and answer any questions that they may have.

What are their perceptions? What do they know about developmental disabilities? What is their lived experience?

Importantly, employer representatives discussed their appreciation for the information sessions the employment specialists provided to them. Noting this idea, Derek, an employer representative said,

[P]rior to the individual coming to work for us, the [employment specialists] came in and did a presentation and an explanation of the person [with disabilities], the skill sets, the mindset of that person and explained it really clearly to all our employees. [...] [It] was an excellent presentation. Anybody who had any questions, they could bring it up at that point.

In addition to communication between organizational leaders and their existing employees, which is often facilitated by information provided by employment specialists, employer representatives also explained that communication between themselves and the employee with disabilities is necessary once the individual with disabilities is employed. Employers need to communicate with the individual with disabilities on workplace matters such as their expectations for the individual with disabilities or when issues arise. In turn, communication initiated by the individual with disabilities and directed at the employer or their colleagues is important if the individual has questions, issues, or support needs that should be addressed:

[W]e tell the individual if they have any issues whatsoever, they can come to whoever's available, for example, like myself and the other [supervisor] or management or the secretaries, anybody. Basically, the individual tends to come to me mostly because I am their direct [supervisor] or direct boss. And we deal with it on a daily basis, and usually it's always something extremely minor. (Derek, employer representative)

This communication is also established through regular check-ins. For example,

It's reassessing almost on a daily and weekly basis. To put it in a different perspective, it's not like the guys over in Hunter's Corner [the warehouse area that repackages adult beverages where the employees with disabilities are working] or the guys over in the licensing pick area or the drivers, they're not working in little silos. So I talk to every single person, and so does the operations manager, Bryce, we talk to them every single day. And it could be talking about deliveries or hockey or politics or likes or dislikes or whatever. We're always communicating with everybody all the time. [...] I can talk to these guys and get their ideas and share ideas and talk to them about what we really want to do and what we should do. [...] It's not like we talk to Big Hunter [an employee with disabilities] once every three months we get his ideas or talk to him about how he's feeling. It's a daily thing. (Jordan, employer representative)

Trust in the employment specialist. Participants discussed the importance of employer representatives' trust in employment specialists. Participants stressed the importance that employers trust that employment specialists will work to meet their needs throughout the job carving process. Participants discussed that employment specialists work to meet employers' needs by providing employers with employees that are suitable to the organization and by providing employers with the necessary support and assistance.

To begin, employment specialists showcased their trustworthiness by providing employers with the best candidate for the job:

We have relationships with employers, like there are times when we'll say, 'we don't have anyone at this time,' because we're not going to just give you anyone because we have a

relationship. [...] we want you to trust [us], and we're looking for success. (Lillian, employment specialist)

In this vein, trust is paramount to facilitating the job carving process because it reassures the employer representatives that the employment specialists are setting the individual with disabilities up to succeed by providing the organization with the right employee for their needs.

In addition to ensuring the right candidate is found, employment specialists noted the importance of being honest and transparent with the employer representatives when discussing the individual with disabilities and the job carving process. Their honesty and transparency provides employer representatives with realistic expectations of the job carving process. For example,

I believe transparency is the best way to go about looking for inclusive employment opportunities. [Employers are] hard to find as they are. The last thing I want to do is burn or have an employer feel like I've burnt them by not sort of giving them full disclosure. And so when I know there are candidates oftentimes will require some form of job carving to make it a success for them, then for me in my mind the best conversation is to try to have that upfront with the employer. (Jack, employment specialist)

Following a good match between the person on one hand, and the job and the organization on the other, employment specialists continue to build trust with employers by providing the appropriate type and level of supports at the appropriate time. For instance, Stephanie, an employment specialist noted,

[The employment specialists are] present with [the employee with disabilities] for the entire duration of her shift. So a job coach does that [...] and we'll come and check, [...] a spot check is once a month. But if there's any issues or concerns then we start increasing [support].

One of our individuals who just got the job with the [municipal government], his job coach is going [for] one block every day. Just because it's such a good [employment] opportunity and we want him to feel really confident. And when he's going to tell us that he's okay for us to not be there and we agree, then that's when we start pulling away and coming once a week. And then just going by sort of the necessity of the support that's needed. It just depends on each individual and their position. [...] like one [individual with disabilities] has been employed at [a supermarket chain] for eight years. One's been at [a restaurant chain] for 10 years. [...] we don't go there every week. We go there every month. So [the amount of support] just depends on their situation and how they're managing their position [and] the support.

Employment specialists also fostered trust by providing the employer representatives with the necessary assistance and support when issues arise during the job carving process:

You have to prove it, you got to earn [the trust]. They have to know that when there's issues that we're going to be running to jump to deal with those issues. [...] Yeah, trust is earned.

Unfortunately, it can't be something that's just there. (Sabrina, employment specialist)

Of note, trust can be implicitly present when the employment specialists demonstrate that they are available, not only when they check-in on the employer, but whenever they are needed:

“[A]lways being there any time 24/7. Call us if you need anything and then doing the checkup maybe every month to see how things are going and checking in with the employee” (Tammy, employment specialist).

The importance of trust was also discussed by employer representatives. Employer representatives discussed that they trusted that the employment specialists worked to find a suitable employee to match the needs of the organization, and appreciated the honesty that

typified their interactions with the employment specialists: “Whichever agency I’m working with, they’re always bringing me somebody, and they’re always engaging me with somebody who fits the skill set, who fits the role, and they’re setting them up to succeed. So we have little worry in that respect that the individuals that we potentially onboard aren’t of an excellent quality to begin with” (Hailey, employer representative).

Echoing the importance of availability to foster trust, employer representatives also discussed that they knew the employment specialists were available whenever they may need them and would be there for them if called upon. For example, Jordan, an employer representative, said,

I know if I need help or if the operations manager here needs help, we know how to reach out to these folks. We’ve got their business cards in our pockets at all times and we can just simply call them and ask the manager there.

Importantly, trust was facilitated by the specific knowledge and skills the employment specialists possess, something also acknowledged by the employment specialists themselves as described previously: “[The hiring managers] need to have trust [...] in the [employment specialist] organizations too. So to know that [employment specialists] know their stuff and they’re kind of experts on disability and that they’re a trusted resource” (Timothy, employer representative).

Finally, trust was also facilitated by having one main contact at the employment resource center who responds to needs effectively and in a timely manner. As Grace, an employer representative discussed,

I think you have to be able to have that lifeline with the agency as to, okay, we’ve tried this, it’s not working. What else can we do? [...] So to be able to pull that lifeline from the agency,

I mean, I was almost ready to give up and say: I'm sorry, but this isn't working. But they were right there and sent somebody in and worked with [the employee with disabilities] for her next few shifts to try and get her back on track.

Through establishing a trusting relationship, the employer “know[s] this is an [employment resource] organization that I can call upon” (Elizabeth, employer representative).

Engaging in creative practices. Participants highlighted the importance of engaging in creative practices to assist in progressing job carving forward and to solve problems that arise throughout the job carving process. This theme was illustrated by employment specialists when they engage employers in job carving, when they create solutions around organizations' rigid systems and in instances when they provide organizations with suggestions for creative accommodations. Similarly, employer representatives exemplified this theme by engaging in creative practices to recruit and hire individuals with disabilities. Both employment specialists and employer representatives use creativity and imagination to view problems from a different perspective in order to generate solutions.

Employment specialists discussed the importance of engaging in creative practices to connect with potential employers. One creative practice employment specialists employ is using business champions to promote job carving. Business champions are employers in the employment specialists' networks who have interest in, are engaged in, or have previous experience with job carving. These business champions can refer or connect employment specialists to potential employers. Employment specialists also invite business champions to share their job carving experiences when employment specialists are speaking with potential employers as “it has more validity for an employer to talk to another employer about the benefits

[of job carving]” (Jacob, employment specialist). Speaking to this idea, Alexis, an employment specialist discussed,

[T]he manager of [the car dealership] is on our employment taskforce [a group of business champions]. [...] if I want to have a conversation with a business owner, if it’s applicable, it makes more sense sometimes that Carter from [the car dealership] makes the phone call for me on my behalf and says: “Hey, Henry over at [another car dealership], we’ve been working really hard with Alexis at [this Service Agency for People with Intellectual Disabilities] to help find employment for people with intellectual disabilities. It’s been really great for my business. Would you have a conversation with her?” So those kinds of warm lead conversations will get me in the door so that people already know about us, they’ve heard about us in a positive light. We have a lot of employers that are on our taskforce that are employer champions, that have hired themselves and are able to speak really directly about their experience. And then they come to a breakfast with me and introduce me to someone that they know that might also be interested in doing such a thing. So it’s just a lot easier when you have that introduction and that relationship already coming from a good place before you really even step in the door.

Employment specialists also feature stories or interviews with business champions in newsletters, in videos, on websites, and on blogs as a means of sharing successful job carving stories with other employers:

We have a newsletter that goes out every month, and we do an employer of the month as part of that [...] we also have [...] a crossword puzzle on the back page of our newsletter. And the crossword puzzles are current employers. (Sabrina, employment specialist)

In order to expand their network of potential employers, employment specialists also attend business events, career fairs, and conferences as well as deliver presentations to employers. As such, they are always on the lookout for opportunities and are ready to seize them when available. Often, this requires creating new events or activities. As Tyler, an employment specialist, described,

[W]e're always looking for ways to connect with more employers. So we're part of a network that's actually created DEAM, which is Disability Employment Awareness Month. October is Disability Employment Awareness Month, and all our activities we have around that are all focusing on attracting new employers and engaging in conversations.

Furthermore, employment specialists are creative in how they sell the idea of job carving to potential employers. Employment specialists need to tailor their approach for each employer, depending on if the employer is a small, medium, or large organization, a local business or a corporation. This is needed in order to speak about the benefits that are “going to resonate with that particular employer” (Lillian, employment specialist). As Brian, an employment specialist, explained,

[C]ompanies want to know not just like what other companies are doing it, but what other like companies comparable to them are doing it. So a big bank wants to know another big bank is doing it. They don't care that a mom-and-pop shop is doing it, right? So whereas a mom-and-pop shop wants to know that the mom-and-pop shop across the street's doing it and that they've been getting benefits. So I think even those situations have to be really tailored specific to the company because they won't be applicable across the board.

In order to tailor the approach and speak to the benefits that are important to the employer, employment specialists discussed the importance of learning about the organization before

approaching them to job carve. This involves researching the organization and understanding how an individual with disabilities can fit into their organization. For example, Tammy, an employment specialist explained:

I'd definitely start off with the internet and finding out about it, and going to the business.

You know, kind of doing that what they call recon, on the business. [...] having a good idea of [...] what their mission is and how can a person who, you know, wants to do this type of work who has a disability can really add to the culture.

Additionally, employment specialists have to be creative in order to generate solutions to an organization's procedures and policies that may otherwise restrict an individual with disabilities' access to the organization. For example, employment specialists discussed how they will apply in person to an organization to get past the barrier of online applications: "[I]t's really difficult for the individual to get through [the online systems]. We do the old-fashioned way. We walk into the business and we hand in their résumés" (Rose, employment specialist).

Finally, employment specialists spoke about the necessity of thinking of creative solutions to support individuals with disabilities when employed:

One accommodation that we use all the time is lists for people, right, or pictures sometimes even. So people aren't often good at prioritizing or sometimes people have a really short memory [...] it's really important to them to have a list so they know what to do next. So that's an accommodation we use very often. (Lillian, employment specialist)

Echoing the ideas of employment specialists, employer representatives highlighted the importance of engaging in creative practices to generate solutions to problems they encounter throughout the job carving process. Specifically, employer representatives engage in creative

practices in their recruitment and selection process. For instance, Joshua, an employer representative noted:

Often with people with disabilities, they may not have a really lengthy employment history, so we may be looking for different types of references. It may be sports teams, it may be volunteer opportunities that that person's been involved with. But that is always something that we look at right from our first in-person conversation with those people right through to sending out an offer letter.

Employer representatives also discussed the need to think of creative solutions when modifying job duties and responsibilities and when providing accommodations to individuals with disabilities. Employer representatives noted often times these modifications were simple and inexpensive but just required some flexibility and imagination:

[Colleagues] have been using an application in the cellphones when the people [are] hearing impaired. So they use an app when they can show the person instructions instead of writing it over. So they are using technology. [...] you need to be very adaptable. (Liam, employer representative)

Hindrances to Job Carving

The following section discusses four hindrances that detract from a successful job carving process as described by participants. The hindrances to job carving focus on: (a) Lack of awareness, (b) rigidity of systems, (c) breakdown of communication between parties, and (d) presence of employer stressors. These are described, in turn, below.

Lack of awareness. Participants identified employers' lack of awareness as a hindrance to job carving. Employers can lack awareness on the topics of disability and job carving itself. Lacking awareness can result in a lack of willingness to engage in job carving. Lacking

awareness can also result in employers engaging in job carving for charitable reasons (versus employing someone for the skills they bring to the organization) or to enhance an employer's business brand. These ideas are discussed below. Additional supporting quotes of the hindrances to job carving are shown in Table 5.

Employment specialists noted that employers may harbor preconceptions about individuals with disabilities and their capabilities:

I would say sometimes people's ignorance towards disability and what that really means. So sometimes if you say, well [the individual with disabilities] may not be able to do this one part of the job, but maybe we can work it to be other parts. They might think automatically, okay, well, if they can't do that, how are they going to do all these other things? (Catherine, employment specialist)

Furthermore, employment specialists noted that there is a lack of awareness around job carving itself. They discussed that employers may have a misunderstanding of what is expected of them. For example, Tyler, an employment specialist explained,

[Q]uite often I'll meet employers, or we'll be out there, and employers are hesitant. They're kind of, they like the idea, but I think it's one of those teachable moments where you can sort of educate them a little bit about the process.

Employers may also have a misunderstanding of what is involved when job carving and may believe "it's more complicated than it is, but sometimes they won't take the time to hear [about job carving] because it sounds like work" (Mia, employment specialist). Employers may also transfer the negative myths that surround accommodations to the job carving process. As such, employers lack of awareness regarding accommodations can affect employers' participation in job carving. As Brian, an employment specialist, explained,

And I think that when you talk about accommodations themselves, you have a lot of, especially HR professionals who have a lot of negative kind of experiences around it, with performance managing employees and trying to make employees feel productive and things like that. I think you're coming in at a disadvantage a lot of the times just to begin with.

A lack of awareness can result in a lack of willingness to engage in job carving. Indeed, employment specialists explained that employers may be hesitant to job carve because of their misunderstandings or because they are uncomfortable with an unfamiliar concept:

[A]s human beings [...] we have this innate fear of things that we don't know. [...] So if I talk someone into, you know, becoming an inclusive employer but they're not really into it and they want to sabotage it just to be able to say they've done it, some employers are looking for any excuse they can have to not hire inclusively because they're petrified. They don't know what to do" (Jack, employment specialist).

A lack of willingness to engage in job carving can extend to the employees who work with the individual with disabilities. If organizations engage in job carving, employees who lack awareness may resist job carving as a way to express their unwillingness to try something that is different. Speaking to this idea, Sabrina, an employment specialist noted,

Sometimes we've had issues with [the organization's] own staffing, and that is, you know, you work through that. But I think generally the issue has been that they don't really understand who we are and what we do, and they're not open to change and to what they deem as a hassle. But unfortunately, those are also the places that will terminate our clients very quickly.

Employment specialists also highlighted that employers' lack of awareness can lead employers to employ an individual with disabilities as a charitable act. Employers may lack

knowledge of the benefits job carving can bring to the organization and thus, job carve as they believe it is “a nice thing to do for the ‘poor handicapped’ person” (Alexis, employment specialist). Similarly, lack of knowledge on the topics of disability and job carving can also lead employers to job carve to enhance their organization’s brand. When these reasons result in carved positions, employment specialists do not perceive employers as committed to inclusive employment practices. Speaking to this idea, Jack, an employment specialist noted:

[L]et’s face it, inclusive employment, every major corporation in Canada and the United States has wonderful pages on their websites about how [...] inclusive they are in their hiring and the diversity of their hiring because those are what I would call required statements and positions by corporate Canada and corporate America. Now do they follow them? Hell, no. The problem is some do and some follow them way beyond, you know, what anybody can hope for. [...] I met with a company a couple of weeks ago here in [a Canadian city], a big multinational company who were talking about their [Canadian city] office and how to increase inclusive employment within it. They’re bragging because they have been [...] part of inclusive employment for eight years. And so when I asked them, how many people have they got on staff through that program? One person in eight years. And I’m thinking, so that gives you bragging rights? You have 750 something employees, and one of them has a differing ability, and you’re going to claim to be an inclusive employer?

When employers hire individuals with disabilities under a charity model, it can lead to stereotypical employment positions for the individual with disabilities such as fast food-service, nurseries, and janitorial positions. It can also lead to unpaid employment and tokenism. As a result, the work and contribution of the individual with disabilities is undervalued. Stephanie, an employment specialist discussed,

[The individual with disabilities] was volunteering down in a laundry room, like for years, like just down in the basement. They didn't even do folding, you know, towels and clothes and stuff, out with the [employees] upstairs. [...] I just thought that's not what this is about. This isn't just free labor. I want it to be something that they enjoy doing, skills that they can gain, right?

Employment specialists explained that by educating employers and communicating the benefits job carving can bring to the organization, they can break down their stereotypes and move away from the charitable model:

[The employers are] helping us out, right? It's a charitable job, or a token job, right? I've had people call and say, "Hey, you know, I'd really love to have a Down Syndrome boy be the bagger at our [supermarket store]. That looks good to our customers. Do you have a Down Syndrome kid for me?" It's the worst! [...] it stays with that kind of lens that this is charitable work, and isn't this a kind employer to give this [individual with disabilities], you know, a try versus, this person has a lot of great skills and capacities, but we're going to take the time to figure [the skills and capacities] out first and then to sell that to employer of how this person can really contribute, and how they're going to help the culture and they can benefit and they can do the job. We always are on the charitable, please would you do this for this person? It will look good for you. And that doesn't get us where we need to be. (Nina, employment specialist)

Similarly, to the thoughts of employment specialists, employer representatives discussed how employers may lack awareness on the topic of disability. It is important to remember that the employer representatives interviewed had had experiences with job carving; as such, they were often sharing perspectives on what others in their employer networks had said to them.

Employer representatives reported that other employers may be hesitant to employ individuals with disabilities as they may believe there is greater risk in hiring individuals with disabilities in comparison to those without disabilities and that “it’s going to be so hard” (Colleen, employer representative).

Employer representatives also noted there is a lack of understanding surrounding job carving, echoing the idea that fear often guides employer decisions and perspectives. Specifically, there is a misunderstanding surrounding their role and their responsibilities when engaging in job carving. Employers are unsure of what to expect if they were to job carve and they also believe that job carving is too complicated. As a result, employers are reluctant to job carve. As Grace, an employer representative discussed:

I think the missing component is educating the employers of what their responsibilities are or are not in employing people with disabilities because sometimes I think they’re afraid of nothing. They’re afraid of things that don’t exist. They think it’s a much bigger deal than it really is to employ someone with a disability. They’re kind of creating this monster in their head that it’s a huge imposition to hire somebody with a disability when it’s just really not that big a deal to make just the odd little adaptation. And I think the other thing is to make sure that the employer understands that these are just people that just want to be part of society. Sometimes we’re looking at it from the wrong perspective. But the agencies are so busy, why aren’t employers listening to us? But I think they’re not educating the employers of it’s really not as difficult as you think it is to employ someone with a disability.

Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding on what accommodations entail. Employers have a misperception that the accommodations provided to the individual with disabilities are

costly, big adjustments and require a lot of effort on the part of the employer. As Hailey, an employer representative explained as a barrier:

[A] less experienced manager who sort of assumed that 1,000 changes need to happen when really it was like, no, we need to pair them up with a person, which we do anyways. [...]
Again, it's more of perception of all the changes we'd have to make, but when you sat down and said: Okay, what changes? It was like: Oh, well, we just really need to modify one of our already existing procedures. Okay, well, that's not 1,000 changes. That's modifying one procedure.

Like employment specialists, employer representatives noted that lack of awareness can result in a lack of willingness to job carve. If there is a lack of awareness on the part of employees, employees may be hesitant to buy-in to job carving:

[S]ome of our employees [...] were somewhat nervous working with a fellow employee with a disability. You know, whether that would entail something different, you know, I think that maybe some of our people thought there might be some people skills that they don't have that are going to be involved, but we talk about that up front. (Noah, employer representative)

As these results demonstrate, employer representatives like employment specialists discussed the need for education and communication to highlight what is involved and the benefits of job carving to mitigate hesitation.

Rigidity of systems. Both employment specialists and employer representatives expressed that systems in place in organizations sometimes acted as barriers to job carving. Indeed, fixed or inflexible employer policies and procedures are cited as a hindrance to job carving.

Employment specialists discussed how job carving may be limited by companies' rigid procedures during the application and selection process, or by fixed job descriptions. An often

discussed example of inflexible organizational systems was the use of online applications and pre-screen tests, both of which may create barriers for individuals with disabilities. These human resource procedures create problems because they may preclude further opportunities to engage in conversations regarding job carving: “Usually a lot of companies will have a policy they won’t even talk to you unless you have that application filled out” (Tyler, employment specialist).

Strict policies also restrict companies from creating individualized positions for the individual with disabilities. This is reflected when Mia, an employment specialist notes:

[HR] said: Really, you know, we’re in a union environment, it’s really... it’s black and white and there’s no grey. You can’t, because we talked about job carving and all those other pieces. You can’t just do that. It’s black and white; it’s not grey. You can’t create positions. [...] HR or unions, I don’t know which one is harder...

Rigid policies may also restrict companies from modifying job descriptions. As Sabrina, an employment specialist, discussed,

We’ve had a lot of guys that are willing to work a lot of jobs, but [one company] had said if they can’t work at the till then we can’t hire them for anything. Even though there’s other people in that company that clearly are only doing one job that our guys could do, if our guys can’t work the till, which again that is a barrier for many of our guys, then they’re not able to have a job that works around that. [...] So there’s no job carving. It’s an all or nothing and they’re not even open to the conversation.

Employer representatives mirrored the employment specialists’ sentiments and acknowledged the barrier rigid systems create for job carving. For example, rigid systems impede the hiring of the individual with disabilities if there are strict procedures the employer is

required to follow when selecting candidates for the job. If certain job specifications and requirements are listed, the individual with disabilities will not be considered unless they hold all of the requirements in the job description as the employer may need to demonstrate that they hired the best candidate for the job:

We have pretty set rules for creating new positions. And if we tried to do something that went against collective agreements, yeah. [...] If we've got someone who feels they were qualified for a role and someone else got it, if it's unionized then you'll get grievances on that. And because of that we have to always have essentially proof and evidence of why someone was selected. (Timothy, employer representative)

It is important to note that these challenges are often experienced in unionized and larger organizational environments. Speaking to this idea, Alexis, an employment specialist discussed, I find [the inflexibility of HR is] often an excuse and I find that like small- to medium-sized businesses, that's never an issue. We never hear that as a problem or a complaint of why they cannot hire someone or why they would not be interested. We never hear that from small- to medium-sized business at all. Definitely bigger corporations and organizations or businesses that have unions, sometimes that is also something that is thrown out there. And some of the bigger like nuts to crack, like the [federal government] and things, and the [municipal government], we've heard that as well before.

Non-unionized employers felt they had greater flexibility in engaging in job carving, as Colleen, an employer representative explained: “[Job carving is] much more flexible in my job because we don't deal with unions thus far. So we don't have that extreme rigidity that you're facing at [other employers].”

Breakdown of communication between parties. Communication plays a fundamental role in all stages of the job carving process. It is critical to negotiating the employment terms and building the relationship between parties prior to employing the individual with disabilities and it is paramount to maintaining the relationship between parties after the individual with disabilities is employed. As such, breakdown in communication is a barrier in its own right. When there is a breakdown of communication between parties, it can affect the job carving outcome.

Employment specialists noted a breakdown in communication between the organization and themselves can occur as well as a breakdown in communication between the organization and the individual with disabilities. Employer representatives discussed breakdowns in communication between the employment specialists and themselves. All are discussed, in turn, below.

First, employment specialists discussed that a breakdown in communication between the employer and themselves can occur when the employment specialist fails to communicate the needs of the individual with disabilities and when the employer fails to communicate when issues have arisen or when they require support. When the employment specialist and the employer are not communicating, this can result in the individual with disabilities failing to receive appropriate supports and assistance or being placed in a position that is misaligned with their interests. When these issues go unresolved, it may result in the employer's belief that the employment arrangement is no longer successful and may lead to the termination of the individual with disabilities. For example, Ruth, an employment specialist noted:

You know, some of them may say that it's going good, but then if something happens, I mean... there have been times when we just learned that, you know, it's not good at all and it

should have been nipped in the bud. The conversation should have taken place months before this issue.

Second, employment specialists explained that a breakdown in communication between the organization and the individual with disabilities can also occur. This happens primarily when employers fail to clearly communicate their expectations to the individual with disabilities. This can result in the employer perceiving that the individual with disabilities is underperforming and may lead to their termination. Other times, some individuals in the organization choose to communicate only with the employment specialist when this person is on site, instead of communicating directly with the individual with disabilities:

[T]here's some staff at a [Dollar store retail chain] or [a multinational fast food restaurant chain] that will communicate to the support worker, they won't talk to the individual directly.

It's like they think they can't understand them. And obviously they can; they're working there. (Rose, employment specialist)

This can lead to the segregation of the individual with disabilities and the perception that the employment specialist is the employee rather than the individual with disabilities. It also devalues the individual with disabilities relative to other workers in the organization.

Similarly, employer representatives discussed how a breakdown in communication between the employment specialists and themselves can affect the relationship. Employer representatives explained that miscommunications can occur when they are discussing what they need from the employment specialist. As Liam, an employer representative explained:

[W]e had another individual [with disabilities] that would show up but he wasn't the right fit and it was because of a miscommunication between the agency and us, not because he was

not able to perform the job. It's just simply that we needed, another skills needed right to perform this job.

Presence of employer stressors. When employers are experiencing stressors, they are less likely to engage in job carving. Stressors are internal or external demands, such as an event, an experience, or environmental stimulus, that may cause an individual to experience stress. In this vein, employment specialists discussed that companies would often not consider job carving because they were already dealing with other stressors, such as an organization's lack of resources. In particular, a lack of financial resources was highlighted as a key stressor, as highlighted by Tyler, an employment specialist:

The job carving piece was a really difficult thing to work at because, quite frankly, most companies were just trying to survive. And so that opportunity to have that conversation about customizing a job or creating a job when the employer has just laid off hundreds and hundreds of employees didn't really sit well.

Brian, an employment specialist concurred when saying: "I think it does inevitably come down to dollars and cents and I think that there needs to be a really strong motivation for an employer to do job carving in a lot of cases." Time and the number of positions available were also cited as resources that, if lacking, affected job carving.

Participants explained that these stressors had an impact on the number and quality of job candidates applying for positions. For instance, employment specialists noted a higher number of candidates were competing for the same positions as the individuals with disabilities:

[H]iring someone with disability sometimes involves some accommodations. [...] if an employer wants someone to dedicate about 40 hours and we can only offer 20 and [the employer] has the opportunity to hire someone [who] can give him the full 40 or 30 hours, he

will go for the 40 hours. So in the situation where we have a lot of people [applying] for that position and someone who can work a little hours competing to someone who has 40, the employer goes, “No we have the 40 because we have a lot of people competing for just very few jobs”. (Larissa, employment specialist)

Employment specialists also discussed other employer stressors, in particular changes in management, and its effects on job carving. Changes in management may lead to the loss of an internal champion who supported the individual with disabilities. If the change in management results in a supervisor or manager who is unsupportive of the carved position, the individual with disabilities may encounter difficulties in the position and may lose their job. This stressor was discussed by Mia, an employment specialist, when she said,

Well the manager changed at the [fast food restaurant] there, and the manager that was there before was extremely supportive, you know, all those pieces. New manager, not at all, and she’s making it very difficult [for the employee with disabilities].

Employer representatives echoed these perspectives. When companies faced financial uncertainty, employers noted a decline in opportunities for job carving, as described by Frank, an employer representative: “[I]f I’m not making the money, if I don’t have the contracts, I can’t hire new people.”

The number of positions available was also a barrier to carving. For example, when organizations felt they had reached the limit of individuals they can employ, employers could not engage in job carving: “I’ve got two [employees with disabilities] already, I’m maxed out. But I can’t take on the world here, but I feel two for the size of our store is kind of we’re at our max potential here” (Grace, employer representative). Interestingly, employer representatives also

noted that they received interest from a higher number of qualified candidates that were competing for the same positions as individuals with disabilities:

[W]e've across the board seen just a higher level of candidate coming in. So there's obviously the economic pressures of creating sales and sales drive the ability to hire more people. But in terms of the quality of candidates, we've seen an uptick in level of experience, level of education in the past few years through the economic downturn. (Joshua, employer representative)

Discussion

Individuals with disabilities continue to face more barriers in gaining employment and developing their careers compared to their counterparts without a disability (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). Job carving is an important initiative for individuals with disabilities to increase their participation in the workforce and gain meaningful employment outcomes (Nietupski & Hamre-Nietupski; Wehman et al., 2013). Although job carving is often used in practice, it has garnered little research attention within the field of IOOB. Thus, there is a need to examine the conditions that enable and the conditions that constrain the job carving process from the perspective of subject matter experts involved in the job carving process: employment specialists whose responsibilities are assisting job seekers with disabilities to find meaningful employment and employer representatives (HR personnel, supervisors, managers, and owners) who have hired individuals with disabilities through job carving. My analysis, based on focus groups and in-depth interviews with these subject matter experts, revealed six facilitators and four hindrances to a successful job carving process. The facilitators are the conditions that participants expressed as enabling the job carving process and assisting the process in resulting in a successful outcome. The hindrances are the conditions that participants expressed as

detracting from the process and restricting the process from becoming a successful outcome. Importantly, the facilitators and hindrances were captured from participants' lived experiences. Furthermore, they were evident among both employment specialists and employer representatives, demonstrating their weight in supporting and impeding the job carving process.

Below, I review the facilitators and hindrances to the job carving process with an eye toward exploring each through an IOOB lens. Most notably, proactive job design theories, specifically i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2006) and job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), are key to understanding the job carving process, and they help explain several of the themes uncovered. I also rely on other key IOOB constructs, such as person-job fit (Edwards, 1991), social inclusion and ostracism (O'Reilly, Robinson, & Schabram, 2012), organizational culture (Schur, Kruse, Blasi, & Blanck, 2009), integrative bargaining (Walton & McKersie, 1991), trust (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995), and stereotyping (Cuddy et al., 2009) to better understand facilitators and hindrances to job carving success. I discuss each theme in turn, starting with the facilitators, followed by the hindrances. After discussing each facilitator and hindrance, I describe a process model to illustrate how the facilitators and hindrances unfold over time across the different stages of the job carving process.

Facilitators to Job Carving

Adopting a strength-centric approach. A main facilitator highlighted by both classes of participants—employment specialists and employer representatives was the importance of adopting a strength-centric approach. A strength-centric approach acknowledges that individuals with disabilities have strengths and a position can be carved to match those strengths. Participants discussed individuals' capabilities, skills, talents, as well as interests and preferences in their notion of strengths. This theme was viewed as central to the success of job carving

because maintaining a strength-centric approach shifts the focus from *disabilities* to abilities. When employment specialists and employers fail to adopt a strength-centric approach, an emphasis is placed on the limitations of the individuals with disabilities and a distinction is made between individuals who are *abled* and individuals who are *disabled* (Baldrige et al., 2015). As such, an in-group of the *abled* or “*normal people*” and an out-group of the *disabled* or *people with disabilities* is formed. As organizations depend on their employees’ abilities, an emphasis on an individual’s perceived *disabilities* affects their employment outcomes. In contrast, individuals that adopt a strength-centric approach place the focus and awareness on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all individuals and the distinction between the in-group and out-group is no longer implied. Importantly, successful employment is predicated on employees’ knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Interestingly, a strength-centric approach is a key component of the job carving process itself. Job carving assigns an individual with disabilities the components of the job that they can successfully perform (Griffin & Targett, 2001) implying that only the components that align with their capabilities, skills, and talents are assigned to individuals with disabilities. A strength-centric approach also aligns with the objective of the discovery phase within job carving. The discovery phase aims to identify the strengths, skills, interests, and goals of the job seeker in addition to identifying their support needs (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). As such, a strength-centric approach is necessary to guide the job carving process.

The importance of adopting a strength-centric approach can be further understood through the lens of person-job fit (e.g., Edwards, 1991). Person-job fit refers to the compatibility between an individual’s characteristics and the characteristics of the job or tasks (Edwards, 1991; Kristof-Brown, 2007). Research on person-job fit suggests that when there is more of a fit between an

individual and the job, they are more likely to experience positive outcomes, most notably enhanced job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational commitment (Kristoff-Brown et al., 2005). One of the two conceptualizations of fit, need-supplies fit, refers to the correspondence between employees' needs, desires, or preferences and the characteristics of the job that they perform (i.e., pay, participation in decision making; Edwards, 1991; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005). Applied to the job carving process, employment specialists and employers explained that they engage in a strength-focused exploration process with the individual with disabilities to ensure a match between the individual with disabilities' needs, goals, and preferences with the characteristics of the job. The second form of fit, demands-abilities fit, refers to the correspondence between the job demands (i.e., role overload; requirements for adequate job performance) and an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics and considers fit from an organizational perspective as opposed to the individual (Edwards, 1991; Kristof-Brown, 2007). This notion was present in the job carving process, as individuals with disabilities' strengths (i.e., capabilities, skills, and talents) must match demands of the organization. That is, the individual with disabilities must add value to the organization through their strengths.

The idea of adopting a strength-centric approach to explore and match the strengths of an individual to the job in order to result in positive outcomes is also seen within the job design theories of job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2006). Although job carving differs from job crafting and i-deals in that it is a process specific towards individuals with disabilities (Griffin & Targett, 2001), it shares the importance of examining an individuals' strengths to customize the job so that it is a better fit for the individual (Berg et al., 2013; Rousseau et al., 2006). For instance, Berg et al. (2013) noted employees use their motives

(i.e., enjoyment), strengths (i.e., problem solving skills), and passions (i.e., learning) to guide their job crafting efforts to reshape their jobs to produce a better person-job fit (Berg et al., 2013). Similarly, Rousseau et al. (2006) explained that organizations grant a customized employment condition to satisfy the personal needs, values, and preferences of a particular employee. Furthermore, employees emphasize their talents (i.e., skills and experience) and the unique characteristics they can bring to the organization when bargaining for i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2016).

Valuing and involving the individual with disabilities. A second facilitator noted by both parties was valuing and involving the individual with disabilities both in the job carving process and within the organization. To start, employment specialists discussed the importance of involving and allowing the individual with disabilities to be the driver of the job carving process. Many individuals with disabilities are not given the opportunity to learn and practice making career-related decisions, which can be attributed to the attitudes and practices of caregivers and service providers and less to do with their impairments (Feldman, 2004; West & Parent, 1992). The opportunity to choose where to work and to choose specific characteristics of the job and organization such as pay, work hours, and training methods is a key feature of supported employment (West & Parent, 1992). Thus, instead of making decisions *for* the individual with disabilities, successful job carving is predicated on empowering individuals to make their own employment-related decisions, and providing individuals with disabilities the opportunity to make choices concerning employment (e.g., about tasks).

The importance of individuals with disabilities being involved in, and the drivers of, the job carving process corresponds to aspects of job crafting and i-deals. When job crafting, employees take the initiative to leverage the knowledge they have of their jobs and themselves to

proactively alter the boundaries of their jobs to create more meaningful positions (Berg et al., 2013; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Similarly, i-deals allow employees to initiate and engage management in discussions and negotiations for an individualized employment arrangement (Rousseau et al., 2006). The involvement of the employee in all three job design processes (job carving, job crafting, and i-deals) is in contrast to the limited involvement of the employee as represented in another key theory of job design—the job characteristic model. Within this model, management initiates and is responsible for changing the job design of their employees. There is little opportunity for employee involvement in the job design process as employees are only involved to the extent that they provide information about their jobs to management (Oldham & Fried, 2016; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Thus, job carving is closer in spirit to i-deals and job crafting than it is to the job characteristic model. To be sure, in job carving, the involvement of the individual with disabilities will be supported by the employment specialist, which is not typically the case for job crafting and i-deals.

Employer representatives viewed valuing and involving individual with disabilities as the provision of the same policies and practices, such as accommodations, onboarding, and training, as their coworkers without disabilities. Thus, equal treatment in terms of access to organizational policies and practices was essential in the eyes of employers. Equal access has also been linked to inclusion in the workplace (Samant et al., 2009). This finding also highlights the fact that employees without disabilities frequently request accommodations from their employers to meet their personal needs (Schur et al., 2014). These can include accommodations such as changes in work schedules to accommodate child or elder care and requests to modify the workspace. As such, accommodations requests should not be thought of only in the realm of individuals with disabilities.

Employer representatives discussed the facilitator of valuing and involving individuals with disabilities in terms of integrating them into the organization. This finding aligns with a key feature of supported employment, which states that individuals with disabilities are to be employed in integrated work settings (Wehman et al., 2013). Individuals with disabilities that work in integrated work settings are employed in a typical business setting in which they carry out their duties alongside and interact with coworkers without disabilities. This enables individuals with disabilities to have employment experiences that corresponds with those of individuals without disabilities.

Of note, respondents stressed that valuing and involving went beyond mere co-existence, which can sometimes occur in poorly designed integrated work settings. More critical to the long-term success of job carving is the social and organizational integration of individuals with disabilities in organizational life: ignoring, rejecting, or socially excluding an individual will have a damaging impact on their well-being. Indeed, research on ostracism (O'Reilly et al., 2012) has shown that it leads to immediate and direct negative emotional reactions such as feelings of sadness and anger, and in some cases, even physical pain. Furthermore, individuals who are the target of ostracism can often react by cognitively and emotionally avoiding the situation in attempt to avoid the negative effects of ostracism. These immediate consequences are often followed by subsequent negative experiences such as strong feelings of loneliness and lowered self-esteem in addition to further behavioral consequences like that of engaging in self-defeating behaviors. To avoid these outcomes, employer representatives shared the many ways in which they ensure that individuals with disabilities were not ostracized by involving them in the organization's formal and informal functions and activities such as social events and team meetings.

Presence of internal support within the company. A third facilitator noted by participants was the importance of internal support within the organization. An internal champion can encourage job carving initiatives and foster broad organizational buy-in by creating awareness of the benefits of job carving and assist the company through the initiative. However, participants noted that without buy-in from other employees within the organization, job carving may be unsuccessful. The importance of internal support to ensure successful job carving can be understood through research on organizational culture. This research suggests that the experiences of individuals with disabilities may be shaped by the organizational culture (i.e., the values and norms, adopted values, and the physical and social environment in an organization; Schein, 2010; Schur et al., 2009) and can affect the employment of individuals with disabilities (Schur, Kruse & Blanck, 2005). Whether internal support for job carving within an organization is fostered may depend on the aspects of its culture. For example, organizations may commit to employing individuals with disabilities by engaging in job carving. However, this commitment may be incongruent with the unspoken beliefs and assumptions of the organization. As such, the physical and social environment in an organization, like the physical space (i.e., lack of accessible workstations) and the attitudes of supervisors and coworkers towards individuals with disabilities (i.e., stereotypes), remain inaccessible and unchanged. This can affect the ability for the individual with disabilities to become fully integrated and accepted in the organization. In support of the importance of a supportive culture, participants noted that it is insufficient for an internal champion to encourage job carving initiatives. Buy-in, or agreement to support job carving initiatives, is necessary at all levels of the organization, and especially from supervisors and co-workers who will be working with the employee with disabilities.

An organizational culture based on a customized needs model, as opposed to an equity model, may help ensure internal support (Schur et al., 2005; Schur et al., 2009). A customized needs model is one in which an organization's culture values flexibility, supportiveness, and is sensitive to the needs of all employees. As such, this organizational culture is more likely to approve and support accommodations. Furthermore, support from coworkers for an individual with disabilities' accommodation request can help validate the individual with disabilities' value as an employee (Schur et al., 2014). In contrast, an equity model is one found in bureaucratic organizations in which the culture values competitive achievement and emphasizes equity (Schur et al., 2005; Schur et al., 2009). It is less likely to approve and support accommodations as accommodations are likely to be viewed as unfair especially when they are perceived to benefit the accommodated individual, cause coworkers' jobs to be more difficult or less desirable, and cause coworkers to lose competitive rewards (Paetzold et al., 2008; Schur et al., 2014). Furthermore, negative reactions from coworkers towards an individual with disabilities' accommodation request are negatively linked to perceived organizational support and organizational commitment (Schur et al., 2014). Extending these notion to job carving, an organizational culture based on a customized needs model may be more likely to cultivate buy-in from supervisors and coworkers leading to internal support for job carving initiatives.

Communication between parties. The importance of communication between parties was another facilitator discussed by both employment specialists and employer representatives. Within their discussion of the need for communication between parties, employment specialists noted communication between themselves and the individual with disabilities is important to assess the individual's strengths, abilities, interests, preferences, and support needs. Research on representative negotiations, or negotiations in which a representative negotiates on behalf of a

client (Gelfand, Fulmer & Severance, 2011), notes that the representative is likely to have different preferences and values than the client (Korobkin, 2014). Thus, it is necessary for a representative to meaningfully discuss with their client prior to negotiation in order to understand the client's preferences and values. Furthermore, communicating with the individual with disabilities about these strengths assists employment specialists in adopting the strength-centric approach discussed previously.

Both employment specialists and employer representatives expressed that the success of job carving hinged on communication between the two parties. In some ways, job carving can be seen as a negotiation between parties. Research on integrative bargaining emphasizes the importance of communication to achieving optimum negotiation goals (Walton & McKersie, 1999). Indeed, a maximum exchange of information within the early phase of negotiation, or the pre-negotiation phase, is required to identify clearly and accurately the problems or concerns perceived by each party. Walton and McKersie (1991) highlight that skills of communication is needed by the parties to ensure that the relevant information is exchanged as they progress through the negotiation process. As such, parties need to be clear as possible in order to provide thorough and accurate information regarding potential solutions or alternative outcomes to the defined problems. This allows for the parties to arrive at the final solution that benefits both parties. Applied to job carving, a successful negotiation of a carved position is dependent on both parties communicating relevant information regarding their needs and expectations. Employment specialists are to identify their needs for the individual with disabilities and employers are to identify their business needs.

As a third instantiation of the communication facilitator, employer representatives emphasized the need for communication between the organizational leaders and their employees.

Buy-in can be fostered when the organization's leaders explain to their employees what job carving is, who the individual with disabilities is that will be joining the team, and why the organization is engaging in job carving. As a result, communication can enable internal support within the company for job carving initiatives. The importance of communication between the organization and their employees is also seen within i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2006; Rousseau et al., 2016). Rousseau et al. (2016) note that employers tend to be fearful of how the coworkers of the i-dealer will react. They suggest that open communication of the i-deal between the manager and coworkers may help enable a successful i-deal and enhance coworkers' perceptions of fairness (Rousseau et al., 2016). Extending this to job carving, it is important that the organizational leaders, with or without the help of employment specialists, communicate their reasons for engaging in job carving and communicate changes that will be occurring to elicit more positive responses from coworkers. Finally, employer representatives also discussed the need for employers to communicate with individuals with disabilities on workplace matters such as their expectations. This is aligned with the importance of employers clearly stating their expectations of the employee when negotiating i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2016).

Trust in the employment specialist. Another facilitator noted by both parties was trust in the employment specialist, which can be understood through Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman's (1995) ability, benevolence, and integrity model of trust. Employers' trust in the employment specialists is enabled by the unique and essential knowledge and skills the employment specialists possess. Employers rely on employment specialists' ability, or their skills and competencies, on the subjects of job carving, individuals with disabilities, and the specific employee with disabilities that is being considered for employment in a particular situation. Of note, ability was an essential element of establishing a trusting relationship and employment

specialists discussed the many ways in which they highlight their expertise. Employment specialists demonstrated their skills and competencies by providing the appropriate types and level of supports to the individual with disabilities in addition to providing the proper support and assistance to employers when needed. Furthermore, employment specialists strived to be seen as high in benevolence to employers. To demonstrate their benevolence, or to show that they have genuine concern and want to do good by the employers (Mayer et al., 1995), employment specialists behaved in ways to demonstrate that they work to meet the employers' needs. One way in which they accomplished this was to provide employers with the best candidate for the job to ensure that the job carving process also benefits the employer. In addition, they demonstrated their benevolence by being honest and transparent in their discussions with the employers, a point that was also acknowledged and valued by employer representatives. Finally, employment specialists also strived to be seen as high in integrity to employers. For example, employment specialists demonstrated that they are available, not only when they check-in on the employer, but whenever they are needed. This sentiment was echoed by employer representatives who noted that their employment specialists were always available when needed, and as promised. Knowing that help was only a phone call away created a sense of comfort for employer representatives. This congruency between words and actions impacts the degree to which employers perceive employment specialists as having integrity (Mayer et al. 1995). Overall, these characteristics of the employment specialists lead the employment specialists to be seen as trustworthy and thus, employers are more willing to trust them and engage in the job carving process. As trust varies across relationships (Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007), trust is also facilitated by having one main contact at the employment resource

center who responds to the employers' needs. This point was highlighted repeatedly by employer representatives.

The importance of trust as a condition which facilitates the job carving process corresponds to the importance of trust as a condition which facilitates integrative negotiations (Walton & McKersie, 1991). Indeed, displaying benevolence and integrity are cited as ways to display an individual's trustworthiness when negotiating (Korobkin, 2014). Trust in negotiations allows both parties to freely and candidly communicate their needs and problems and discuss their preferences for solutions without fear that the information will be used against them or that they will be taken advantage of by the other party (Kong, Dirks & Ferrin, 2014; Walton & McKersie, 1991). This in turn permits the parties to reach a mutually beneficial solution to their problems. As such, trust enables communication between the negotiating parties (Walton & McKersie, 1991). Extended to the job carving process, trust assists the communication between the employment specialists and employers, as discussed previously.

Furthermore, trustworthiness is also important in negotiations as negotiations are oftentimes ongoing relationships rather than one time occurrences. Likewise, as the job carving process continues after the negotiation of the carved position and may also lead to future carved positions with the employer, employers' ongoing trust in the employment specialist is important. Trust must therefore continue to exist across time, and as the relationship between employment specialists and employers deepens. In addition, employment specialists' trustworthiness can impact whether business champions will refer them and validate their reputation to potential additional employers, as discussed below. In sum, employment specialists' trustworthiness is paramount to facilitating a successful job carving process.

Engaging in creative practices. Another facilitator participants discussed was the importance of engaging in creative practices to move the job carving process forward and to solve problems that arise. Generating creative solutions to problems is also seen within integrative negotiations. Indeed, when individuals can freely communicate their ideas during integrative negotiations, and the parties are supportive of problem solving and testing various alternatives, it can result in more creative solutions to the problem being negotiated (Walton & McKersie, 1991). Extended to the job carving process, employment specialists and employer representatives may engage in creative solutions to problems that arise during job carving if there is an open space between the two parties to engage in discussions and experimentations of acceptable solutions.

One specific method in which employment specialists engage in creative practices is by utilizing business champions to connect with potential employers. These business champions are employers in the employment specialists' networks who have interest in, engagement in, or have past experience with job carving. They promote job carving and refer the employment specialists to potential employers. Business champions' influence in engaging potential employers can be understood by the concept of integrity in Mayer et al.'s (1995) ability, benevolence, and integrity model of trust discussed above. In fact, integrity of a party is also demonstrated through credible communications about the individual from other parties. Applied to the job carving process, business champions can vouch for employment specialists in discussions with potential new employers, and confirm that employment specialists have upheld their assurances to employers and therefore, are trustworthy. Employment specialists noted that these validations from business champions are important in order to connect with potential employers, and made sure to leverage them when needed.

Another method in which employment specialists engage in creative practices is by tailoring the approach used to sell potential employers on the idea of job carving. In order to tailor the approach and speak to the benefits that are important to each employer, employment specialists discussed the importance of thoroughly researching the organization prior to connecting with them. This stage in the job carving process mirrors the pre-bargaining preparation stage in the negotiation process (Korobkin, 2014). In this stage, the negotiator assesses his or her own interests and situation, analyzes the likely desires, requirements, and acceptable alternatives of the other party, and considers how to find a mutually acceptable agreement in which the negotiator's desires and the desires of the other party are both met. Similarly, the employment specialist considers the interests and situation of the individual with disabilities and through researching the organization, analyzes the likely desires, requirements, of the employer, and the possible solutions that the employer would find of value. This research and reflection helps the employment specialist to determine how an individual with disabilities can fit into the organization and to determine how to negotiate a carved position that will benefit both parties.

Hindrances to Job Carving

Lack of awareness. Employment specialists and employer representatives cited employers' general lack of awareness about job carving and disabilities as one of the main hindrances to the job carving process. This discussion is in accordance with the recurrent barriers individuals with disabilities face to employment as this lack of familiarity can lead employers to rely on stereotypes (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; Dovidio, Pagotto & Hebl, 2011; Kaye et al., 2011; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008). Indeed, employers cling to stereotypes about individuals with disabilities' job-related abilities, poor performance levels, and high absenteeism and turnover

rates (Gröschl, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2008; Kaye et al., 2011). As such, discrimination towards individual with disabilities often focuses on individuals' inabilities, or areas of limitations, rather than their abilities (Baldrige et al., 2015; Kaye et al., 2011). In addition, employers hold concerns regarding the potential costs of accommodations (Gold, Oire, Fabian & Wewiorski, 2012; Hernandez et al., 2008; Kaye et al., 2011; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008; see also Domzal, Houtenville, & Sharma, 2008).

Both parties noted that employers' lack of awareness regarding disability can result in a lack of willingness to engage in job carving. Furthermore, participants discussed that employers' general lack of knowledge surrounding the job carving process and their misperception that accommodations are costly adjustments that will burden the employer can affect their willingness to engage in job carving. However, the assumptions that there is a greater risk to hiring individuals with disabilities compared to those without disabilities and the pervasive myths that surround accommodations are generally unfounded (Kaletta et al., 2012; Kaye et al., 2011; Peck & Kirkbridge, 2001).

Employment specialists discussed that employers' lack of knowledge can result in employers engaging in job carving for charitable reasons as opposed to hiring an individual with disabilities for the contributions they can provide to the organization. This idea echoes the principles of the stereotype content model (Cuddy et al., 2009; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). According to the stereotype content model, individuals with disabilities are perceived as low in competence but high in warmth. Groups stereotyped as such are disrespected for their lack of competence but are also pitied and elicit compassion and sympathy from others. Applied to the job carving process, when employers perceive individuals with disabilities as kind but helpless (Cuddy et al., 2009), they may hire individuals with disabilities as a compassionate

gesture. Furthermore, employing an individual with disabilities under a charity model can lead to stereotypical employment positions (i.e., fast food-service, nurseries, janitorial positions; Fabian, 2013) and tokenism. Tokenism is a result of employers hiring solely to fill positions with employees who meet a diversity 'label' rather than acknowledging the individual with disabilities' abilities and value to the organization (Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2008).

As a result of the hindrance lack of awareness creates, both parties stressed the need for education and communication between employment specialists and employers as well as between employers and their employees. This education serves to highlight the benefits of job carving and to break down the stereotypes towards individuals with disabilities to mitigate hesitation towards job carving. Educating employers to demystify disabilities and job carving is in line with Kaye et al. (2011) as well as Peck and Kirkbridge's (2001) strategies organizations can employ to overcome their hesitancy related to hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.

Rigidity of systems. Rigidity in organizations' policies and procedures was noted as a hindrance to job carving. Indeed, employment specialists discussed the inflexibility in organizations' policies and procedures during the application and selection process and organizations' rigidity regarding creating and modifying job descriptions. Employer representatives also discussed rigidity in terms of procedures and rules for selecting candidates in addition to rigidity in creating and modifying job descriptions. Both parties acknowledged that the rigidity in policies and procedures are often experienced in unionized and larger organizational environments. In comparison, non-unionized and smaller organizational environments allow for greater flexibility and thus, one does not experience the same rigidity in these systems. This finding echoes a condition which influences whether an i-deal will likely be

granted. Indeed, Rousseau et al. (2006) discussed that i-deals are more likely to arise in start-ups and new organizational settings as opposed to established, bureaucratic organizational settings. Established organizations generally have developed norms and rules in addition to standard procedures. These settings promote standardization and consistency and as such, would restrict i-deals as managers may have limited flexibility and discretion to grant individualized employment arrangements. Indeed, ex ante i-deals are limited in organizational settings in which labor practices are highly regulated. However, Rousseau et al. (2006) explain, employees occupying positions within start-ups and new organizational settings are more likely to be granted i-deals. As these organizational settings often have limited standardized practices, employees have greater opportunities to shape their positions (Rousseau et al., 2016). In addition, a novel position, as compared to a long-standing position, allows for greater opportunities to customization as the position is not yet standardized (Rousseau et al., 2006). The impact of unions on constraining potential job carving is similar to that noted for i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2006).

Organizations' rigid systems as a barrier to the job carving process can also be understood through research on organizational culture (Schur et al., 2005). Indeed, an organizational culture based on an equity model is likely to influence whether accommodations are granted to individuals with disabilities. As discussed earlier, an organizational culture based on an equity model, as opposed to a customized needs model, is found in bureaucratic organizations which value competitive achievement and equity among its employees (Schur et al., 2005; Schur et al., 2009). This type of organizational culture is more likely to foster resentment towards differential treatment for individuals with disabilities as accommodations are generally perceived as unfair. Furthermore, unionized workplaces may also have organizational cultures that make it more

difficult to accommodate individuals with disabilities as unions' collective bargaining agreements typically establish rules and systems that can make workplace accommodations difficult to grant (Schur et al., 2005). Extending these notion to job carving, a bureaucratic and unionized environment that adopts an organizational culture based on an equity model, may be more likely to enforce rigid systems that act as a hindrance to the job carving process.

Breakdown of communication between parties. Communication plays a fundamental role in all stages of the job carving process. Thus, a breakdown in communication can hinder a successful job carving process. Both parties acknowledged that a breakdown in communication between employment specialists and employers can occur. The harmful effects of a breakdown of communication is understood from an integrative bargaining perspective (Walton & McKersie, 1991). Indeed, improper communication can lead to an inadequate exchange of information between the two parties. For example, when a breakdown in communication occurs during negotiations, there will be a low exchange of information regarding the problem, there will be fewer alternative solutions presented, and the potential outcomes of these solutions may not be discussed. These shortcomings will result in the parties producing relatively substandard solutions to the problem. A parallel is apparent with the job carving process as a breakdown in communication can result in a low exchange of information regarding the needs and preferences of both parties at the start of the job carving process in addition to a low exchange of information regarding issues that arise once the individual with disabilities has been employed. As participants noted, when the employment specialist and the employer are not communicating, the individual with disabilities may be placed in a position that misaligns with their strengths or misaligns with the needs of the employer. Furthermore, the individual with disabilities may fail to receive the necessary supports and assistance. A breakdown in communication between the

employment specialists and employer representatives can also result in fewer alternative solutions being discussed to mitigate problems, as seen when the employer terminates the individual with disabilities prior to any discussion with the employment specialist.

Employment specialists also noted a breakdown in communication can occur between the organization and the individual with disabilities. In certain instances, this breakdown in communication between parties can transpire when some individuals in the organization choose to communicate only with the employment specialist when this person is on site, rather than communicating directly with the individual with disabilities. This situation corresponds to the breakdown in communication that can occur in representative negotiations (Rubin & Sander, 1988). An additional party in the form of a representative can result in the negotiating parties relying extensively on the representative to communicate on their behalf, which affects the client and the other party's ability to communicate effectively with each other. As a result, the client and the other party exclusively use the representative to communicate as opposed to communicating directly with each other. An employment specialist is integral to the job carving process because of the severity of disability of the person for whom a position is being carved, and because the employment specialist possesses the expertise in facilitating employment. As such, an employment specialist is needed to enable the job carving process. However, employment specialists should not be relied on extensively to communicate with the person with disabilities once that person has entered the organization. When this occurs, employment specialists noted that a breakdown in communication between the organization and the individual with disabilities can lead to negative outcomes including the segregation of the individual with disabilities and devaluing the individual with disabilities relative to other employees in the organization.

Presence of employer stressors. Participants also discussed the presence of employer stressors as a hindrance to the job carving process. Both parties acknowledged that a lack of financial resources in particular was a key stressor affecting the employer's willingness to engage in job carving and their willingness to retain the carved position. This finding is in line with a circumstance that can impact the nature and the outcomes of an i-deal (Rousseau et al., 2006). Indeed, labor markets greatly influence the appropriateness and the outcomes of an ex ante i-deal. Ex ante i-deals are i-deals that are granted during the recruitment process. A job candidate that possesses a certain skill that is in high demand but is in short supply is in a "hot" labor market. In this labor market, the individual is more likely to seek and attain an ex ante i-deal compared to if the individual was in a "cold" labor market. In such a labor market, there may be a large supply of job candidates possessing a certain skill or there may be a low demand of that specific skill. Thus, the individual may be competing with a high number of candidates for the same position. This is consistent with both parties' discussions regarding the impact of financial stressors on job carving. Employers were limited in the number of employees they could hire or employees they could retain due to financial uncertainties that had typified many of their industries during a recent economic downturn. Individuals with disabilities were thus competing with a higher number and quality of job candidates for the same position. Employment specialists noted that during financial uncertainty, employers were less willing to engage in job carving and in some instances terminated carved positions.

Employment specialists also discussed the effects of another employer stressor, changes in management, on the job carving process. Changes in management may result in a new supervisor or manager who is unsupportive of the carved position. As a result, the individual with disabilities may experience unprecedented difficulties and may lose their job as a result of this

change in leadership. This stressor can also be examined through an i-deals lens (Rousseau et al., 2006). Ex post i-deals are i-deals that are granted once an individual is on the job. Ex post i-deals are more likely than ex ante i-deals to arise in the context of a relationship between the individual and their employer as opposed to resulting from factors related to the labor market. An employer who has a quality relationship with an individual has credible information, such as their past contributions, regarding the individual's value to the organization. This information can cause a manager to grant an ex post i-deal. Yet, if a change in management were to occur, the new manager would not necessarily understand the basis for the ex post i-deal and could be less supportive of the arrangement. This can be extended to the effects changes in management may have on retaining a carved position. A new supervisor or manager who is unsupportive of the carved position may not have access to credible information (i.e., past work contributions) as evidence of the value the individual with disabilities brings to the organization. Instead, the individual with disabilities may be judge on the bases of their *disability* rather than their ability. As such, the individual with disabilities may experience difficulties or the carved position may be terminated.

The Job Carving Process Model

To understand the temporal nature in which the facilitators and hindrances emerge during the job carving process, I generated a process model, presented in Figure 2. This model illustrates the different stages of the job carving process: pre-negotiation, negotiation, and post-negotiation, described below. These stages are based upon the stages seen in the customized employment process model (Jorgensen Smith, Dillahunt-Aspillaga, & Kenney, 2015), the integrative bargaining process model (Walton & McKersie, 1999), the general stages of

negotiation (Korobkin, 2014), in addition to a conceptualization of the stages of i-deals elicited to summarize effective managerial strategies to successful i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2016).

The model focuses on the stages in which each facilitator and hindrance is most likely to manifest to enable or to constrain the job carving process as experienced by employment specialists and employer representatives. That is, the model's purpose is to demonstrate how each facilitator and hindrance unfolds over time. It is important to note that each facilitator and hindrance does not necessarily occur within every job carving process and that these conditions may not be the only facilitators and hindrances in which the job carving process can be enabled or constrained.

The pre-negotiation stage is an exploration of the individual with disabilities as well as occupational opportunities (Wehman et al. 2013). As noted previously, it consists of the discovery phase that the employment specialist conducts with the individual with disabilities (Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006) as well as the informational interview in which the employment specialist identifies potential places of employment and engages with potential employers about the possibility of job carving (Wehman et al., 2013). The negotiation stage sees the individual with disabilities applying for employment positions and the employment specialist and the employer negotiating and solidifying decisions regarding the specific working considerations (i.e., job duties, hours, wages, expectations; Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). The post-negotiation stage consists of the employer managing the implementation, the individual with disabilities working in the carved position, and the employer managing the ongoing employment relationship. This stage also consists of the employment specialist providing individualized post-placement supports and monitoring the employment relationship (Harvey et al., 2013; Martin Luecking & Luecking, 2006). The job carving process ends when post-

employment supports from the employment specialist are no longer required (Griffin & Targett, 2001).

As illustrated in Figure 2, valuing and involving the individual with disabilities, communication between the parties, and engaging in creative practices are facilitators that are salient throughout the entire job carving process, from pre-negotiation to post-negotiation. Other facilitators and hindrances, however, were more salient in specific phases. This was the case of the strength-centric approach, which was most apparent within the pre-negotiation and negotiation stages of the job carving process. Similarly, the presence of internal support within the company can act as a facilitator during the pre-negotiation stage when the employment specialist engages in the informational interview with the employer. Internal support continues to be a key facilitator throughout the remaining of the negotiation phase, and ensures longevity of the carved position in the post-negotiation phase. Trust in the employment specialist is a facilitator that appears in the negotiation and post-negotiation stages. It is less relevant to the pre-negotiation phase because this phase is characterized by preparation work done by the employment specialist, before initiating a relationship with a possible employer.

Turning now to the hindrances, lack of awareness, rigidity of systems, and the presence of employer stressors are hindrances that can first appear during the pre-negotiation stage, when the employment specialist explores the occupational opportunities for the individual with disabilities, and can exist until the end of the job carving process. The breakdown of communication between parties becomes apparent during the negotiation and post-negotiation stages. Indeed, a breakdown in communication is less relevant in the pre-negotiation stage as this stage is largely shaped by interactions between employment specialists and individuals with disabilities.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

The present study contains several strengths. First, it relied on two complementary methods of data collection: focus groups and in-depth interviews. This type of triangulation, that is the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative inquiry, is a recommended approach (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014; Morgan, 1996). Using complementary methods of data collection is advantageous in adding breadth and depth to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Morgan, 1996). Both methods have distinct and complementary strengths. The focus groups' interactive nature showcased the extent of participants' agreement and disagreement on the topics discussed providing rich information about the range of perspectives and experiences (Doody et al., 2013; Morgan, 1996; Patton, 1999). The interactive nature of focus groups can help generate a lively discussion, whereby participants' comments jog one another's recollections. On the other hand, the interviews allowed for an in-depth exploration into participants' perspectives and experiences. Participants have more time to discuss their unique experiences as opposed to focus groups where participants share speaking time and take turns discussing their perspectives.

The present study also employed purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) to recruit participants for the focus groups and in-depth interviews. As such, participants were information-rich cases, or subject-matter experts, who have experiences with job carving from two unique perspectives. Indeed, participants have been on either end of the job carving process as either employment agency specialists who have placed employees in carved positions and employers who have hired through job carving initiatives. Selecting information-rich cases yielded insights and an in-depth understanding of the facilitators and hindrances to a successful job carving process from two complementary perspectives (Patton, 2002).

In addition, we triangulated via data sources which involved collecting data from a wide range of participants within and across focus groups as well as across interviews (Shenton, 2004). Participants were employees from a range of employment resource centers as well as from a variety of organizations and industries. This allowed participants' perspectives from different points of view to be compared and verified against others which increased credibility of the findings (Patton, 1999).

Finally, participants' responses converged across the participant groups (i.e., employment specialists, employer representatives) and across the data collection methods (i.e., focus groups, in-depth interviews). Convergence of the data is a key strength of the present study as it enhances trustworthiness of the findings (Carter et al., 2014).

Notwithstanding these strengths, a few limitations exist. Although this study selected participants from a wide range of employment resource centers and a variety of organizations and industries, the present study could have benefited from wider recruitment in geographical terms as the participants were mainly drawn from one Canadian province. It may be that the job carving process is different in provinces that experienced different economic challenges and opportunities. Future studies could look at job carving in smaller communities, where there are fewer employers but where community ties might be stronger. The latter might be an additional facilitator that employment specialists can leverage when necessary.

Furthermore, a potential limitation of the focus group discussions is that some participants may have refrained from disclosing information as other participants were present in the focus groups making the focus groups less confidential than individual interviews (Hennink et al., 2011). To alleviate this concern, we used tactics to promote comfort in the information participants shared during the focus groups as discussed previously (i.e., encouraging all

participants to contribute, ensuring that the discussion was confidential; Shenton, 2004). To aid in ensuring confidentiality of participants, participants did not disclose their full names or names of employers during the focus group discussions. Segmenting the focus groups between employer representatives and employment specialists also allowed both groups to speak freely without being worried about damaging existing or future relationships. This homogeneity in background ensured there was not a disparity in status between participants that may have prevented participants from feeling comfortable being honest in their discussions (Doody et al., 2013) and assisted in the sharing of information within the group discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

While the present study recruited participants that are subject matter experts, I did not interview the individuals with disabilities or their families. This was because the primary aim of this research is to understand the facilitators and hindrances from the perspective of the two parties who engage in the job carving negotiation process. Thus, an important avenue of future research is to involve participants who have been in carved positions long term, and those for whom the job carving process was unsuccessful.

The focus of this study was to explore the facilitators and hindrances of job carving. Future work could take a process-based approach. That is, to look at the process of job carving and examine how the different approaches to negotiating carved positions lead to long term success. In this work, I focused on understanding the facilitators and hindrances through integrative negotiation (Walton & McKersie, 1991), and it may be that some specific negotiation tactics are more conducive to carving success than others. For instance, future studies could examine the implications related to how employment specialists communicate proposals during the job carving negotiation process with employers. It may be that differences in how employment

specialists state their objectives, whether as the problems they experience or the solutions they propose, and whether the problem or recommended solution is stated in terms of specifics or in general principles can have implications for the progress of the negotiation process and whether the negotiation results in a carved position.

Conclusion

Individuals with disabilities often experience more barriers to employment compared to those without disabilities (Baldrige et al., 2015; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). Job carving can improve the quantity and quality of meaningful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities by individualizing the job for those with disabilities (Griffin et al., 2007; Wehman et al., 2013). Job carving is a well-known practice that is often used by employment specialists that benefits both the individual with disabilities and the organization. However, less is known about job carving within the fields of IOOB. As such, this study provides valuable exploratory research and deepens the understanding of the facilitators that enable and hindrances that constrain a successful job carving process from the perspective of employment specialists and employer representatives. Six facilitators and four hindrances were identified and reviewed within the context of IOOB theories, most notably, the job design theories of i-deals and job crafting. These facilitators and hindrances represent key conditions influencing a successful job carving process. This study has highlighted the need for further systematic research attention on job carving to reduce the employment inequities encountered by individuals with disabilities and to increase their participation in the workforce. This study also has relevance to practice as it can guide those involved in the job carving process to support the facilitators and reduce the hindrances to job carving. In turn, successful job carving can help increase the long-term and meaningful participation of people with disabilities in the labor market.

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Table 1

Comparing and Contrasting Job Carving and Job Design Models

Elements	Job Carving	Job Crafting	Idiosyncratic Deals
Focus	Specific to individuals with disabilities	All employees	All employees
Benefits	Employee and employer	Employee; benefits to employer are situationally dependent	Employee and employer
Involved Parties	Individual with disabilities, employment specialist, employer	Employee	Employee and Employer
Direction	Bottom-up approach	Bottom-up approach	Bottom-up approach
Process	Systematic	Improvised	Systematic
Driver	Individual with disabilities' strengths, goals, support needs and needs of organization	Employee's strengths, passions, motives	Employee's 5 resources and needs of the organization

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants who Participated in Focus Groups

	Focus Group 1	Focus Group 2	Focus Group 3
	Employees from Employment Resource Centers	Employees from Employment Resource Centers	Employer Representatives
Category	N	N	N
Sex			
Male	2	0	3
Female	3	4	2
Age (in years)			
18-29	1	1	1
30-39	0	0	2
40-49	0	2	0
50-59	2	0	1
60+	0	1	1
Unreported	2	0	0
Experience Working in Current Organization			
6 months to less than 2 years	0	2	0
2 years to less than 5 years	2	0	2
5 years to less than 10 years	1	2	1
10 years +	0	0	2
Unreported	2	0	0
Disability			
None	3	3	4
Seeing / Pain	0	1	0
Mental / Psychological	0	0	1
Unreported	2	0	0

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Participants who Participated in Interviews

Category	Interviews Conducted with Employees from Employment Resource Centers	Interviews Conducted with Employer Representatives
	N	N
Sex		
Male	1	4
Female	5	4
Unreported	4	1
Age (in years)		
18-29	0	0
30-39	2	2
40-49	2	2
50-59	1	1
60+	1	3
Unreported	4	1
Experience Working in Current Organization		
6 months to less than 2 years	1	1
2 years to less than 5 years	1	1
5 years to less than 10 years	0	1
10+ years	4	5
Unreported	4	1
Disability		
None	6	7
Hearing	0	1
Unreported	4	1

Table 4

Additional Quotes of Facilitators to Job Carving

	Employment Specialists	Employer Representatives
Adopting a strength-centric approach	<p>“[Job carving is] finding a way that within each job that we focus on the strengths and find a way to kind of highlight those strengths to make the job work for different people” (Sabrina).</p> <p>“So, for example, Kaylee’s dream job is working in a gaming store. [...] So then we go to the manager [of the gaming store] and say [...] this is Kaylee. She would like to have a job in your store. Here’s her résumé. She’s really good at organizing things. She loves to play games. She knows all the games there is” (Rose).</p> <p>“And looking at people’s abilities, not their disabilities, because whether you have a disability or not, you have [abilities], and they’re good at some things and not good at others. We all can attest to that. There’s things in our job descriptions, not here because we job carve ourselves as well, but that you’re just not good at, and other things where you shine, so why not switch those around and it makes more sense for the employer” (Lillian).</p> <p>“We do an exploration process where we find out about the job seeker, and in depth, find out what it is that rocks their boat and what they want to do, what their passions are. And then we try to [...] narrow down where they would really want to work, where</p>	<p>“Well I guess the optimum, what we shoot for is any time we found that often you can take parts away from one job that the people doing the job didn’t want anyways. So whether it’s due to ability or personality, you know, people somewhat have a type of task that they prefer, whether it’s the type of employee who prefers physical tasks; some employees prefer repetitive; others might prefer computer work, thinking, problem solving. So typically, if you have an employee that enjoys repetitive tasks and you’re looking to carve those things out, the ideal ones would be finding the areas you could carve out from somebody else’s position where those employees probably don’t want the repetitive tasks. [...] but any time we can find [...] there’s a job that somebody else or a task that somebody else would enjoy that we know the people currently doing it don’t, that’s kind of the best case” (Noah).</p> <p>“[O]ne thing we didn’t know is that [the individual with disabilities] was also a graphic artist. So we ended up being able to use more of her talents in that way where she was able to make little in-store signs and they were always pretty, and she was excellent with customers, and always absolutely delightful. And she still works for us and she now trains our staff, you know, customer service in the retail”</p>

they're going to be successful at, right? Rather than, like for example, [a store] says, oh, we need five people. If you just send five people that really don't give a rat's butt if they sit in a, you know, if they fold clothes all day, like you've got to make sure that that person actually wants to do that job, that's good at it, you know? Whereas just putting somebody in a job just so that they have a job isn't going to work out in the long run. He'll work for a bit, but then he's going to quit, right?" (Mia).

“[Job carving is] about tying in someone's abilities with the needs of the organization” (Timothy).

“[Employment specialists] should have a really clear understanding of what the employer needs and what those skills are that they need, and they'll know what the candidate or client's abilities are, and they'll be able to really match them up well” (Brian).

“I think it was the real esteem builder [for the individual with disabilities]; that negotiation process of people talking about what they recognized as a strong point and strong suit [in the individual with disabilities]” (Tammy).

“I believe that most employers job carve for most of their employees because I think fundamentally it's what an employer does to maximize their use and [...] their company's benefit of a particular skill set that an employee brings” (Jack).

(Hailey).

“Like we figured out what does Benjamin like, and we tried to figure out what he could do with those kind of skills and abilities and things that he loves and things that challenge him” (Chloe).

“I can try and convince one of my [...] workers to be more, you know, to maintain their paperwork and to make sure that their reports are filed. And it was always a bit of a battle because it wasn't their natural strong suit. And then we were able to rejig the responsibilities where we had an admin staff with a disability [...] incidentally – who could come in and sort of take all those reports, and then the meticulous quality of the reports went to the roof when the colleague who was really passionate about doing those reports did it and had the responsibility, okay, it's your job to make sure this information gets in the database. And when that happened the reports were fantastic. My [...] workers could do more frontline work with people, and they were actually very happy to not have to do the reports. And so it was really a win-win-win” (Melissa).

“[W]e do try and make sure that in anyone, regardless of whether or not they have a disability, their skill set matches what needs to be done and then really try to use people's strengths as much as possible” (Joshua).

“I'm ex-military. You use the people's skills for what they could do. If this guy can do one thing better than

		<p>anybody else, that's what he did. So when I hired through [this Resource Centre for People with Disabilities], I had a specific job in mind, and they had a specific individual that could fill that position.” (Frank)</p>
<p>Valuing and involving the individual with disabilities</p>	<p>“The person [with disabilities] wasn't getting that much enjoyment out of [the dishwasher job], wanted to expand. And so what we did is we approached the team together, like including the individual [with disabilities] who wanted to do something a little bit different with the company. So then we spoke with their supervisor and from there we discussed some things that caught this person's eye he would like to try and just talked about some of the experiences they've had doing it in the past” (Tammy).</p> <p>“We have a strong philosophy of, you know, nothing about me [the individual with disabilities] without me, right?” (Tammy).</p> <p>“Although, I mean, our goal is always to have [the individuals with disabilities] be their own voice” (Sabrina).</p> <p>“And we're just trialing [the position] right now. [...] [The individual with disabilities] sort of gets a three-month, another opportunity here to see how she's doing, and she's had a lot of support from the job coaches during this time, but she's requiring a lot of prompting and things like that now presently. So we don't know after three months if we're going to keep her there or just let her go back to [a position with]</p>	<p>“And then [acknowledging that accommodations are for employees with and without disabilities] also sort of took away that separation that okay, well they need special accommodation because they live with a disability. No, we all need accommodation. It's just for different reasons. So that was kind of why I've been very adamant and passionate about accommodating for everybody, not just for a certain segment of the workforce” (Melissa).</p> <p>“[T]he first question that everybody seems to ask me is: Well what's [the individuals with disabilities] quota? Well there is no quota, [...], because what Big Hunter [an employee with disabilities] could do in an hour is not the same as what Harrison can do in an hour. So what we want everybody to do is do their best, whatever your best is. And so we don't have quotas on anybody in the building, so we're certainly not going to put them on Hunter's Corner [the warehouse area that repackages adult beverages where the employees with disabilities are working]” (Jordan).</p> <p>“And if I look at what we call Hunter's Corner, which is where our disabled folks are working for the most part, you know, Hunter's Corner is a positive, happy place where the entire team has to go over</p>

horses [...] It's going to be up to her, totally up to her. But yeah, it's got to be something she wants to do and be a part of. So we'll just see where that goes" (Stephanie).

"So we openly have that conversation [with the individual with disabilities] and say, hey, you know, you're really interested in this field. This is how we think it's best going to work. Either we're going to take you and walk in. You're going to apply or there's an application online, but we should make a phone call together. Or if the person doesn't communicate verbally as their primary communication, then we will still have the conversation with them, but say we're going to call for you. This is what we would like to say. This is why, and here's how we want to proceed and involve people in the process [...]. But the person being at the driver's seat of that process versus looking for employment specialists in the industry who does it all for someone" (Nina).

"The person with a disability being involved and being the driver, and everyone being useful in the background so that that person's job is truly their job" (Nina).

there and help out during the day. And they talk about video games and all this kind of stuff. But what happens here now is the guys don't look at Hunter and the rest of the guys over there as folks being disabled; they look at them as just Hunter and just Eli and just the team. So it's nice" (Jordan).

"We will always do some sort of live test scenario or showing people what [the job] looks like, regardless of whether or not they have some challenge to employment to make sure that there's a fit there and it's something that that person is happy and excited to do" (Joshua).

"[T]he interesting part is that, yeah, that we're not differentiating between any of the disabled people we have working here and any of the others. They're all part of the group" (Scott).

"We did have [the individual with disabilities] go through our orientation procedure, just like a normal associate. But in that case, someone came with her. So as memory serves me, for Riley, her father came with her because she did have to sign legal documents. We wanted to ensure that a guardian was with her that would ensure that she was signing things that she knew or that her guardian was aware of what she was signing. [...] And it also gave the chance for her to kind of bond with the other new associates. We always find that for all new associates, it's a lot easier to do [orientation] in groups rather than one on one" (Grace).

“We have an anniversary lunch for everybody who has a five, 10-, 15-year anniversary with our company and I went to the one in June. It was my 10-year anniversary and the gal that was celebrating 25 years with the company was a woman with special needs. And it was just amazing. They have anybody in the room that had ever worked with this gal to come up and have a picture taken with her and three quarters of the room got up” (Grace).

“So integrating [the individual with disabilities], and this is one thing that we’ve been really, really working on is to make sure that people are not just in the workplace, but they’re part of the community of that workplace, that they’re being invited to things and not always by somebody in HR holding, saying: hey, don’t forget to invite them. That they’re just being invited, that they’ve built friendships and bonds” (Colleen).

Presence of internal support within the company

“When Ryan was working at [the grocery store], the owner, we had a great relationship. He’s invested” (Mia).

“And our hugest advocate there is the top guy who works underneath the owner, there’s five [fast food restaurants] that the owner owns, and he works for him. And underneath him he has managers at each location. Well the manager changed at the [fast food restaurant] there, and the manager that was there before was extremely supportive, you know, all those pieces. New manager, not at all, and she’s making it very difficult. But if it was up to her she would have

“[My boss is] the president of our company, and he is fully supportive of helping folks with disabilities” (Jordan).

“[W]e had a really understanding manager who was open to absolutely every sort of communication adjustment they had to make [for the individual with disabilities] and was really patient. And so that was a really good situation in our warehouse there for a good, long while” (Hailey).

“I’m more on the HR side of things [...] So I guess something that I would kind of look for in an ideal

let Eleanor go because she doesn't know how to work with Eleanor. She doesn't know the strategies, whereas her boss told her: She's staying" (Mia).

"We try to identify those strong ventures within a company. [...] we use the staff address [the information sessions employment specialists hold for employees prior to the individual with disabilities joining the organization] to informally get a sense as to someone would be a great mentor, a great support. You have co-workers who will ask a lot of questions and be very excited" (Matthew).

"And honestly, without [support from co-workers] we're screwed because it doesn't matter if our manager has a great idea, the rest of the staff are taught that culture, and that again, I know I repeat the word value, but the value of having the individual with disabilities as a co-worker, it's never going to work. [...] [the understanding and support of job carving] starts at management, but it has to be taught all the way down" (Sabrina).

"I think on one hand that you have to have an organization from top to bottom, bottom to top that sees employment as valuable, that puts the time and energy and effort into helping people [with disabilities] be competitively employed and really making that a priority" (Nina).

"[E]ven the person at the very top of the organization and the managers too, how they treat that individual [with disabilities] all the way down to just the

[job carving] situation is to make sure that if we're finding a manager that is flexible and patient so that they are willing to change tasks and things as needed, and that maybe there's some kind of support as well" (Timothy).

"I think [top leadership being supportive of diversity initiatives is] important, but it isn't the be all end all that people say it is. If we can have like management or just even like lower... like a director level be supportive, that's good enough" (Colleen).

"[T]he associates working with [the individuals with disabilities] are excited to see them come to work and be part of the team. To me, that's the ideal situation" (Grace).

"And so hiring Sheldon I think was just kind of a reminder of that whole principle [of supporting each other]. [...] you can lose track of that ideal with the fact that we even do it day to day, but with Sheldon working, it's very obvious that, yeah, we get through every day in this company by supporting each other, and every one of us takes support every day from others. And yeah, just a reminder to all of us the value of that and the importance of it" (Noah).

"And not only have the employees been able to accept the guys in Hunter's Corner [the warehouse area that repackages adult beverages where the employees with disabilities are working], they're actually really proud of being able to help these [individuals with disabilities]. They look out for these

supervisors, very important” (Jessica).

guys like big brothers” (Jordan).

“I think the other thing that’s really important too for an ideal situation is the culture. For an example, [a department store], in [a Canadian city] they have it written in their policy that they’re inclusive employers. And it’s not just a policy that’s stuck on the wall. Everybody lives by that policy” (Denise).

Communication
between parties

“So first you have to understand your client [with disabilities]. Like I said, when you understand your client they know how best to sell their skills, how best to sell that strength, and you look for the right opportunity for them. So if [the clients with disabilities] have the right staff [such as employment specialists] who understands people with disabilities, who understand their strengths. And sometimes clients don’t say it, but then you have to pick on what they say, right? [...] sometimes they don’t want to be judged by their strengths or challenges. So you have to pick and understand and listen to what they’re saying and what they’re not even saying” (Larissa).

“If the person [with disabilities] is learning a new task and they want some support, the job coach will go in and help support that. And that can come either from the employee saying I need some help with this, or it could come from the employer saying we’d like some help with this” (Alexis).

“And if [the individuals with disabilities] don’t like [the carved positions], they can express it at any point in time, you know, that this is not right for me”

“I talked a great length with [the individual with disabilities’ employment specialist] saying, you know, I interviewed her and really like completely non-verbal. So I had great concerns about communication, and they assured me that working together, we could make this work. And it was very challenging. We had probably a month and a half where we really weren’t making any progress, so it did not go quite as smoothly as our first associate [with disabilities]. And we eventually did have to, even though they sent an aide with her for the first couple of times, I did have to reach out to her agency and request further assistance because we just... We were not getting anywhere. She didn’t seem to be learning. She didn’t seem to be able to do any processing at all, and we weren’t able to communicate with her” (Grace).

“[J]ust the time I spent with [the Resource Centre for People with Disabilities] setting [the carved position] up, you know, I think I had all my questions answered going into it. It was pretty well set up. I was pretty well informed going in” (Noah).

(Tammy).

“We give that employer opportunities to offer things too, so it’s not just that we’re going in and demanding this is what [the carved position will] look like. We ask them what kind of things they need done, what’s important to them, and trying to find that happy medium that’s going to make it something that [...] they don’t just consider hiring our guys, but they want to” (Sabrina).

“[L]ike the first step is really talking to the employer. Like the first step you’re working with that job seeker, but then once you identify the industry and where you think they might be a good fit, then it’s talking to that employer and kind of breaking down what the job is and literally what the tasks are, and which tasks... You know, like [a national automotive retailer] is a good example I always use because in the warehouse there’s... someone might have to use the computer and someone might unload the truck and someone might do this and that. Which of those tasks can be shuffled and which can’t? So it’s like the first step is looking at the job descriptions and the tasks and negotiating with the employer” (Lillian).

“Because that communication with [the Resource Center] is super important so that [the employment specialists] can find the best suitable candidate for that role so that [the job carving initiative is] more likely to be successful” (Brian).

“Okay, so [the organization is] offering William the

“Like if I wasn’t honest with my employees to say, okay, I know you don’t love this part of your job, or, I know you’re not especially strong at this part of your job, if I wasn’t honest with them and then was just bringing in somebody [with a disability] behind the scenes to sort of fill gaps, I don’t think we would be successful” (Melissa).

“[B]efore we brought Riley aboard, we have morning huddles with our staff every morning, and I just did prepare the staff that we were going to start this job carving with Riley, bringing her on board so that they were prepared to embrace her when she came in” (Grace).

“You need to be prepared and you need to let the other team members know that a person with a disability is going to work with us, and they need to be aware” (Liam).

“But what we did is we started slow and said here’s where we want you [the employee with disabilities] to work. Here’s what we want you to do. Do your best. And every case that they can do to take off the regular picking team is simply a bonus for us” (Jordan).

“We asked [the individual with disabilities] what she needed. She said: Can I have a bar stool? We said: Yes” (Hailey).

“I would put an experienced instructor on with that individual [with disabilities], and it would kind of

job. Here's what you need to know about William. William has these skills in these areas and these capacities, and when you show me these three different job descriptions in your store, you know, I can tell you right off the bat, here's the areas that William will excel at" (Jack).

"[W]e have our job coaches who go out to their placements and do spot checks on [the individuals with disabilities], talk with their supervisors, talk with their co-workers and see how they're doing" (Stephanie).

"[The employer representative and I] talked about how we could improve. Like maybe there's some things that [the individual with disabilities] needs that she's not getting or maybe there's some things that the managers want her to do that she's not doing. So we had a conference about that, and how we can benefit both parties" (Jessica).

"[T]hat communication key [between the parties], I think, is really the thing that really keeps things flowing. And it has to be so fluid. Some employees [with disabilities] want a lot of communication [...] it changes daily. And some employers are just this is how it is and I'm going to talk to you on Tuesday next week. So it just has to be so fluid between participants, different ones, and different jobs and different employers" (Carole).

"So something that we'll tend to do with companies is we'll provide training for their staff, so it'll be kind of like an awareness training to explain a little bit about

give him a break [from instructing]. And at first he wasn't sure why I was doing that, and to like not go down the negative path, I explained to him that he needed some experience with [instructing] the higher-level lessons" (Elizabeth).

disabilities. They tend to also include like a language and etiquette component, so that it kind of addresses that in advance [before the individual with disabilities begins working] so that people know, oh, okay, like I'm more comfortable, I know what to say or how to interact with that individual. So I think that also helps with staff buy-in to understand a little bit why the organization is doing [job carving], because staff are going to want to know" (Brian).

"[I]f we're [job carving] through the [government employer], sometimes they'll have us come in and talk about the person [with disabilities] we're supporting, so everybody who's going to work with them can better understand them and be aware of if they have any quirks or anything like that" (Catherine).

Trust in the
employment
specialist

"So it was positive [job carving experience] because we knew that we would have a candidate that could do those two pieces of the job, but we didn't have a candidate that could do that other piece. So it was a good experience in that we set the tone [to the employer] from the beginning. We never sent a message that this was something that we did have a candidate that could do all three things" (Matthew).

"And as long as everyone's comfortable and the work is going well then we will fade out and then provide some ongoing follow-up, a phone call, a stop in. If new tasks or new responsibilities are asked of the individual [with disabilities], then we'll go in and assess if strategies need to be put in place" (Matthew).

"It's so important that we interview the agencies too and that we work well with them, that they're open, that like you were saying, that we trust them" (Colleen).

"[W]e felt absolutely certain that [the Resource Centre for People with Disabilities] were there to help us and back us up every step of the way. Yeah, we had no worries. After dealing with them, we had no concerns with [job carving] going in for sure" (Noah).

"I got to know how to deal with certain situations and was always able to call upon [the employment specialist], you know, through email and phoning and different things like that" (Elizabeth).

“[The employers] have to know that the support is there. [...] if something is going on that they can trust that we’ll support them in getting through it, you know, so that [the employment specialists will] help them understand what is needed and required and get the job done. So you do have to have that trust that the job is going to be done” (Stephanie).

“[A]nother best practice is that you respond to their needs and their issues immediately. So [employment specialists] need to be flexible. We need to adapt our schedules and our efforts for the employer, not the other way around. So when that person is starting a job, I mean, we provide training [...] We’re there as much as needed in as little as possible, but we’re really sensitive and conscious of making sure that development of natural supports is positive and it’s successful. And so there’s some specific strategies we use at the job site to ensure that that actually occurs. But again, you know, really no matter what you do, it all comes down to that mutual relationship and respect you have [...] with the employer, right? They have to really trust you. If [the employers] feel comfortable enough to say, you know what? I don’t know what we’re doing with this person [with disabilities], we need some help, I mean, it’s all about relationships, I think” (Jacob).

“And then on an ongoing basis, those employers always have the opportunity to call me should anything happen. If they have a problem with, they call the agency. That’s the first call. If they’re having some issues with Laura because they’ve asked Laura seven

“The agencies for us are really important too, that they’re supportive, that there’s a good relationship between the service provider and the individual [with disabilities]” (Colleen).

“Immediately within an hour and a half [of calling the agency], I had an aide” (Grace).

“Again, depending on the changes [to the carved position], I think the more involved that the changes were, the more we looked at the agency to give us direction” (Hailey).

“I think trust is key in any relationship, personal or professional. So it’s huge” (Joshua).

“Depending on the role and the client, [the agency] may be more involved in training. They may work with our sort of supervisors behind the scenes and some strategies and tactics to support that person along. And then usually the agency is there on an ongoing basis, either in a support role for either the supervisor when challenges arrive or for the client” (Joshua).

“And the agency doesn’t switch around, that this person isn’t working with [the individual with disabilities] one day and then that person’s taken over the file and that person... [...] with the gentleman that works for us, he had one contact at the agency here and that person, she did her job [...] So we knew that there was no problems, that there was no place

times how to clean the floor or what they expect in terms of floor cleaning, and it's not being done, I expect them to call the agency, the job coach, and say, hey, help me with this. I'm having trouble with Laura here. And the agency has to rise to that occasion, provide those support, and work together with them" (Jack).

"And [company representatives] really knowing that they can count on us. [...] they get our cell [phone numbers] and they call and we call them back and we're there for them as they need it" (Lillian, employment specialist).

"I think that you need to be a really strong resource to employers. So anything that pertains to what your goal is, I think you need to be an expert on it because [the employers] look to us as being experts. It should be reflected in our daily practice, the materials we use [...] I mean that you need to, you know, your work needs to be spot on" (Jacob).

that we were, somebody was going to drop the ball. So I guess trust, as long as he was working for us, [the agency] were there to backstop us, and it was the same person. I had one phone number. I didn't have to phone whoever happened to be in the room. So for me, because I kind of am not good with that, just working with one [contact] helped" (Frank).

"The continuity of having the one contact [at the agency] was excellent because we get overwhelmed some days. It's quite busy, and it's just nice to have that support at the end of the day if there was anything I needed to email her about. And it was a quick response all the time" (Elizabeth).

Engaging in creative practices

"So we ask [employers who have job carved] to be a champion employer so that we can send other employers to them if they have any questions because sometimes, we're not an employer, we don't understand some of the nuances of their concerns" (Carole).

"[W]e really do try to focus on employers who we currently have [job carving] [...]. And we'll use that too as a, you know, I know you're [the potential employer] hesitant to buy into what we do. However,

"But then we also do recruitment for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities through a very specific recruitment program that uses job carving and job customization. [...] with a lot of our typical recruitment roles that we do, in an effort to be transparent, we have a lot of very clear class specifications. A lot of people, they get involved with that from unions and compensation, but that means that we don't have the flexibility always to be able to change a lot of those tasks and things. So that was why we created a specific recruitment program that

here's the CEO at [product manufacturer] and here's the CEO of [a national automotive retailer], and here's what they have to say about us and why they think it's such a great thing to work with, with [this service provider for people with developmental disabilities] and our folks. I mean, quite often, that will open a door too" (Sabrina).

"I'm able to say, hey, you know what? I was in a store yesterday. Hey, you know what? Your friend George, who's the manager at such and such store, has just hired three of our folks. And so I know that manager's going to, when I leave is going to call George and say: Hey, George, are you doing this? Are you working with these guys? How's that working for you? And in that case, because I've been working with George for over a year now, I know we will get a good reference. And so I think that's really important as well is that, you know, I can come in and say wonderful things. The problem is who's there to guarantee that what I'm saying in terms of supports, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, are really going to be there if and when they need them? And so internally for a manager of one chain store to be able to speak to a fellow manager of another chain store, then I think it's important that they can support each other in that concept and say, oh yeah, it was great" (Jack).

"I think you also, you need to make sure that your practice is evidence based. So these new employers need to have access to other sources to determine whether or not actually we're legitimate. [...] So the bigger organization [our department is under] has a

allows us to do that customization" (Timothy).

"Now of course, we had to adapt the interview from our norm because the questions were not relevant for [the individual with disabilities]. She didn't have an employment background to refer to, and that's fine. I mean, some of the other people that we hire are from school and they don't have an employment background either. So that's fine. We just adapted to suit her. I didn't really proceed with reference checks as I felt that we had the agency as her reference in that case" (Grace).

"The applications I really like sometimes come with a letter of reference from the place the person has volunteered. That's really nice. If [an individual with disabilities] doesn't have anything on their résumé, I'm like that's fine, but this is a really nice letter about this person. I like that" (Colleen).

"[S]omeone who was one of our transit operators, so driving the city buses, and he had an injury to his wrist, and in recovering through the physio piece, what ended up happening is for the windshield wipers there's a lever that he needed to be able to use, and his wrist just couldn't, he didn't have the strength to be able to twist the knob that was necessary for it. And one of our disability management consultants, just a little bit like ingenious innovation, thought of using the top of a turkey baster to actually put on top of a knob on there so that it allowed him to squeeze with his hand enough to be able to actually do the twisting motion

web page, but we also have a web site. It's [a website link], and that website was actually created for employers. And the purpose of that was to really allow them to access information to determine, you know, what we're all about. So we have a video on inclusion in the work force and it's testimonials from other employers. We have a blog site where we, you know, post articles that employers might be interested in, and then we also have a candidate page where individuals sometimes, if they're comfortable to have their picture put up there and a small blurb about who they are and they're looking for, and then a copy of their résumé. [...] We've actually started getting phone calls from employers who were saying that, yeah, we'd like to get involved in, you know, developing a diverse workforce, but we were really concerned about how to do that. We took a look at your page and took a look at the candidates and realized that there's a strong possibility that we could actually do this. [...] our general society has a real misconception about folks and disabilities. So these pictures and personalizing it just made it a lot more normal. So now we'll actually have employers who will say, yes, I saw your website. We'd like to get involved with this" (Jacob).

"So how I speak [about job carving] to small- to medium-sized business owners, large business owners, corporations, and federal government, all of those employers are all very, very different, and the messaging that goes along with all of, you know, that ask or that trying to secure a job for someone, it's all very, very different" (Alexis).

for it. So it was something that cost \$5, \$10, something like that. And you know, one of our fabrication areas was able to put it on there securely, and he can take it with him to any of the buses he works on. And that little thing just allowed him to continue doing his job" (Timothy).

"[I]t was actually very simple. You just switch the jobs that the two people are doing at that time, and it's not an issue at all actually to have a color-blind line locator" (Noah).

"[F]or Claire, our non-verbal [employee with disabilities], we cut the position down to bite-size pieces. So rather than do shoe processing, we broke it down to processing running shoes specifically, so putting the tags and the shoe dots and the sensors specifically on running shoes, and that little booklet that I had my daughter create for her [to help her with her job duties], the aide took home and adapted it and made it even more specific because she knows Claire better than we do, you know, in a communication style that Claire could understand even better. So we took a tool and created a better tool so that she can flip through the pages one at a time, step one, step two, step three. So she has her own little book, it's just her book, she gets to keep it in her locker and every time she comes to work she comes out, brings her book out and uses her book. So that was a tool that we just created. It was pretty easy. It just needed some adaptations to make it workable for her" (Grace).

“[U]sually a lot of companies will have a policy they won’t even talk to you unless you have that [online] application filled out. So quite often, we’ll just help individuals fill out those applications online, but then we’ll actually go to the business to talk to them in person. And that might mean – you, know you have to be fairly tenacious. I’ll be quite honest that it might take five or six phone calls to an employer before you actually get a hold of them and they want to talk to you. So I often will attend career fairs and business functions, business events, where I know businesses are going to get together and just introduce myself and be part of that equation” (Tyler).

Table 5

Additional Quotes of Hindrances to Job Carving

	Employment Specialists	Employer Representatives
Lack of awareness	<p>“[A] lot of the mentality is stereotyped, that still kind of exists. So I think it’s breaking down those stereotypes, [...] making people aware that people with intellectual disabilities do have capabilities and are able to contribute in a really valuable way to an employer’s general labor component, and trying to make people see that and understand that ahead of time. So breaking some of that stuff down is a huge challenge” (Alexis).</p> <p>“[T]he staff [at an organization], they don’t have a lot of knowledge about persons with cognitive or physical disabilities, [...] it’s been our experience that they don’t really want to take the time to learn because when we go in and we work in these larger franchises or companies, we want staff in the store to take on some tasks as well with our people [with disabilities], to get to know our people a bit better, to develop a relationship and kind of bring them into their culture and be some natural supports for them. But they’re a little bit afraid” (Rose).</p> <p>“[T]he person doing the interviewing said, oh, all these people [with disabilities], they won’t be able to handle this job because it’s too much stress” (Jack).</p> <p>“[G]oing up and approaching [employers], like you don’t know what the employer is going to, how they’re</p>	<p>“[E]mployers just need a little bit of education with regards to employing someone with special abilities is not that scary and there could be so much more to gain. It’s not this huge financial burden that people think it is. I get the feeling that some employers think that they’re going to have to make a huge financial investment to rebuild their whole building to accommodate and make huge sacrifices to bring somebody on board when it’s probably not really, in reality, that’s really not what’s required. Yet, there’s probably so much to gain” (Grace).</p> <p>“I know even the store manager, I had to somewhat talk her into doing [job carving]. Again, it’s that piece of people don’t know what they don’t know, right? She’s never worked with anyone with a disability, didn’t know what to expect. It’s fear of the unknown” (Grace).</p> <p>“Previous bad experiences of managers and/or pre-existing biases of managers [are barriers to job carving]. That’s just what we’re working with right now. We have, I’d say, 60 per cent of our managers who are just give me the right person and we’ll work around it and maybe 40 per cent are like what do you mean, I have to change, or we have to change the environment? or, you know, there’s a hesitancy. And so then that becomes sort of an opportunity for them</p>

going to be feeling about the idea of somebody with a disability working for them. And they usually have a lot greater concerns or they have, you know, whatever they build up their mind is a lot greater than the actual situation is. And if you can't get them past that point, then that's not a success" (Tammy).

"The employer has to value the work that's being done [by the individual with disabilities] because if they don't value the work or it's not necessary, then it becomes a charity case" (Tyler).

to learn, for them to grow and for us to sort of say, okay, this is a again a mutually beneficial arrangement. We get an awesome person and we get an awesome worker" (Hailey).

"I think the biggest thing is if you've got a bunch of people on the floor that are not accepting of the [carved position], I think it can be very detrimental. I know for a fact that, you know, growing up with a best friend who had Down Syndrome, and my cousin [...] he had Rett Syndrome. So I know how much fun people can make of people with disabilities. And I think that if you have the wrong culture in your building to begin with, then a program [for job carving] like this will fail" (Jordan).

"I think the greatest challenge is just a reluctance for change that most people have, which is again where I think the communication from management, if people understand and know why we're doing it, and can see at least our idea of how it makes the company better, then there's less resistance to change going forward" (Noah).

Rigidity of systems

"[T]he job interview process can be difficult for our individuals, especially if their verbal skills are not the best. Also understanding as well. So we like our staff to go and assist them with their interview, but HR doesn't want that. They want to interview the person directly. Or a lot of the stuff is online applications now, and staff will assist individuals with doing their online applications. But our individuals don't have these extensive résumés. A lot of them can't

"[O]ur HR department works really hard to develop a job description. And probably only 80 per cent of it rings true because the other 20 per cent we've carved off into somebody else picking up. But to change the job description as often as we would need it to change would be so cumbersome. We can't do that. So we just work around it and we don't stay true to what our policies and procedures say we should and could be doing [...] And then [because of the

understand. You have to take a test, a skills set test, before you get any further, and they're unable to do that so that right away just excludes our people from getting into anything" (Rose).

"[A multinational retail corporation] have been amazing in employing our guys [with disabilities]. The biggest barrier we've had recently is they've [...] got to take this test online. And some of our guys aren't able to take that test independently, so [the organization] had to restructure and get a lot of secret permission and kind of work around it. And they were willing to work around it at that time, but we're fairly clear in the future if our guys can't pass the written exam they must take to start the job, then they can't be employed there. And our guys are able to do a lot of work they're being asked to do, but there's zero chance they can pass that test independently" (Sabrina).

"[T]he employer was willing to hire inclusively as long as everything could fit by the book. [...] You know, very strict adherence to their own policies, guidelines, job descriptions, et cetera" (Jack).

"But [the technology company] have a segregated separate autism employment program. And the one woman that really wants to work for [the technology company] and would bring so much cannot speak. Not well enough to be understood. And they refused to hire her. They said, everybody needs to customer face, and if she can't do that she can't work at [the technology company even though her position would not entail interacting with customers]" (Denise).

rigidity] I also think we lose that shared learning. So a different department doesn't have the benefit of seeing and hearing what we've done, how we've learned. I mean, another department doesn't even have the benefit of, you know, shared resources as well. We could have the most brilliant graphic designer working under our umbrella, and then a bunch of times, but it's not a full-time position, so the rest of the time we have them acting as a file clerk. Meanwhile, another department could have the most brilliant file clerk but struggles with having a graphic designer. And if only we, you know, cross-collaborated, under the goal of the overall organization, it would be amazing. But the structure doesn't allow for that because your job description reports to a certain classification, which reports to a certain department. So I think the organization as a whole definitely loses out, and people just bend the rules where they need to" (Melissa).

"In the non-profit world I didn't have to work around [inflexible HR systems] because we thankfully could kind of do that as we needed to. Working with the [municipal government] is definitely more challenging because, you know, we just have to try and work around things" (Melissa).

"I know some [employers] they go only take online applications or some people will only, you know, hold an interview at one place. We're big enough but small enough. We have policies, but our policies are not so strict so that they make it impossible for anybody to apply or for anybody to be interviewed"

“[This health care provider] is another example. Like they really want to hire inclusively, and we’re finally kind of getting somewhere where we’re working with one of our funders. But they have said they won’t carve, because it’s a big system, right? They’re not carving. So if we can find the right people for the job description and give them the support that they need, but they don’t carve” (Lillian).

“Well, like for example, like when you’re talking HR, you know like a lot of the HR that we deal with are government, unions. You know, there’s really nobody at the top. It’s HR. You know, you can’t really penetrate the owners, you know, or the stakeholders, if you will, the shareholders or whatever, whoever owns that organization. So it’s really hard to... unless it’s a self-own or something and you can get in the door there, but usually HR is like the top, because you’re talking about jobs that are maybe [administrative]. [The top people are] not going to have a conversation with you about HR stuff because that’s what they pay their HR people to do, right?” (Mia).

(Hailey).

“And we’re not as rigid though as the governments, so we can say well, you know, they don’t have these whatever, but it’s still the best person. But you still could be opening yourself up to litigation if you don’t hire the best person. But what is the best person is up to debate sometimes. We don’t face that as much I would say as they do in the public sector” (Colleen).

“But if we’re talking about someone and job customization and job carving, and we’ve got a typical role, and maybe they could do 70 per cent of that role really, really well, like better than anyone else, but our hiring and our interviews that are all scored is on 100 per cent of the role. So that person who can do 70 per cent amazingly is never going to score high enough if you’re in a competitive market, which we really are in now” (Timothy).

Breakdown of communication between parties

“[The manager] didn’t understand how to work with [an individual with disabilities]. And he was let go prior to any sort of good discussion. And of course, our contact, Ronald, had no idea till it was already done” (Mia).

“That’s those fears sometimes coordinators or facilitators [that work with the individual with disabilities]. They don’t want to push the envelope and

Well, I think with the agency, yes, between us and the agency for not having the right candidate or the right information to provide to the agency, so the agency can choose the best person to fill the role. That kind of [barrier in] communication only” (Liam).

“Okay, so I will say totally that communication could be [a barrier] in terms of like [...] I mean,

advocate and ask. A fear of maybe burning bridges or upsetting the owner just in case the economy” (Matthew).

“And the boss is like yes, that’s much better, [the individual with disabilities is] doing much better. And about two weeks, three weeks again, no, his productivity is just not up to what it should be. You know, I don’t know if this is going to work. And I said, well, how much do you want him to do in a day? He said, well, I think he said about 300 boxes or something. And I went: Did you tell him? He said: No” (Denise).

“[T]he employer will communicate just with the job carver or job coach, manager [...] and will not actually talk to the person [with disabilities] they’ve hired and not see them. And then you see people [with disabilities] that work at [a retail corporation] for eight years and have never been asked to be promoted or get a raise or anything because it turns into that token job. And we see it over and over again” (Nina).

“And we want to get in there [and provide support] before a breakdown in the relationship happens because if there’s a breakdown the individual will be terminated. It’s happened” (Rose).

“[A breakdown in communication] can lead to the termination of the individual from the job or they get pulled off the tasks that they were doing and given something else that they don’t like, that they’re incapable of doing. So it’s kind of like, okay, well we

communication in terms of [asking for] the right tools and the proper time and training. [...] we have to be able to provide [the right tools and training] for the person that we are hiring [with disabilities] that is going to be helping us. And if we don’t communicate that [...] then it’s going to be a barrier to have them helping us, and we will have to say no instead of saying yes, we can work together and find a solution” (Liam).

“So I think the learning from that [carved position where the employer had difficulty with the individual with disabilities] was we should have asked for assistance sooner in that case” (Grace).

“But sometimes [agency support doesn’t work] because a delivery [job] needs to be done when it needs to be done, so it’s not like we can wait until after [the employment specialist is ready]. We can’t wait for two or three hours sometimes for someone to get back. [...] that doesn’t work as well [...] because it really is about our communication with the support person, given that most of our people are non-verbal” (Chloe).

know we'll just push you out the door because you're not working out, so we'll just find something that you don't like doing, then maybe you won't show up or you'll quit. That's happened in the past" (Rose).

"[B]ecause we're acting on [our clients] behalf or at their ask, sometimes [communication with clients and the company or ourselves and the company is] where things may break down, unfortunately. Although, I mean, our goal is always to have [our clients] be their own voice" (Sabrina).

Presence of
employer stressors

"With some of these stores, like [the discount store retail chain], for example, the managers change a lot. There's a high turnover in staff, so you don't know. Sometimes you have a manager or the floor staff that will work with you, and sometimes [...] the manager changes then you have the new one comes in, and they won't work with you" (Rose).

"Like I was just talking to a young man [with a disability] who's a fourth-year plumber. And he said he hasn't been able to keep a job for more than three months because people just see him as different. So he says it'll be good until the supervisor changes. So the one that hired him doesn't understand, or is gone, and this new person is like why is he so different? Why is he so weird? He's out of here, right?" (Denise).

"And the minimum wage is another one. So every time the minimum wage goes up a few of our guys [with disabilities] lose a job. When you got a lot of small businesses, they literally cannot handle the increase"

"[Because of the economy] that was the hardest sell because we're only given a finite number of hours per week and it varies week to week to use for our staff. So as soon as you start assigning hours to especially the individual, and the question comes up, well, is that productive hours? And it's a fair question. And that was the biggest question that I was being asked by my store manager" (Grace).

"We haven't lost anybody. We haven't hired any, I think it's been harder to hire people on. And for sure like way more applications. If we were getting 50 before, we might be getting 1,000 now, especially in [name of industry]. That's our sector. What I'm seeing across the board is not just an impact on persons with disabilities, but also for members of visible minority groups, women" (Colleen).

We were able to take on a lot more applications this year because of the economy. I know it's a negative thing. The economy is what it is, but at the same time

(Sabrina).

“[N]ow with our minimum wage increase and all of this stuff going on, it is difficult to get our guys paid positions. So that is a true reality. It’s pretty sad, but, yeah, I think a lot of people are looking for jobs. So in the economy right now it’s hard to get them paid positions” (Stephanie).

“But a lot that is just there is literally no budget available whatsoever and [employers] want to be supportive and they want to create one of these positions, but there’s no dollars because they’re running with a deficit or there’s just not enough money to be able to do what they want to do” (Timothy).

“So we were competing against hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of other people who have more skills and more education than a lot of the folks [with disabilities] that we work with” (Tyler).

in the [name of] industry you don’t make a lot of money, so most years we do not get a lot of people that are applying for jobs. So it’s really hard to get the amount of staff that we need to run with. And this year we were over and above and we were able to actually turn away some people, which we’ve never had to do before” (Elizabeth).

“Yeah, I’ve definitely seen the same thing as far as the uptick in quantity and quality [of job applicants], just like Colleen and Joshua were saying, for sure” (Timothy).

“Last winter or spring, like the winter and spring of 2017, things were pretty slow, and that’s because a lot of our jobs, a lot of our work was for catering. And catering is one of the things that comes down in a recession because businesses are cutting back and that’s an expense that you can do without. So [the economy] does that” (Chloe).

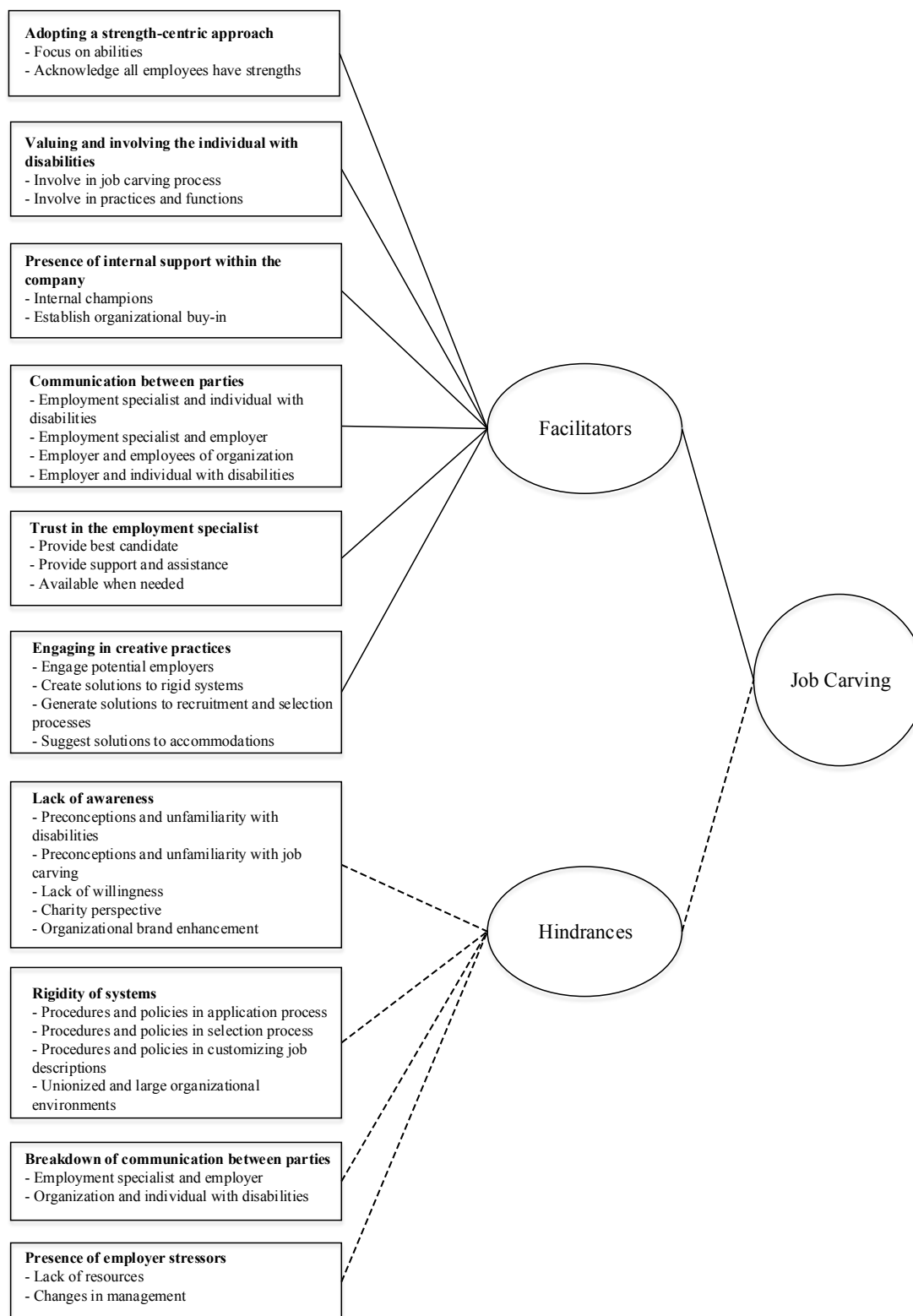


Figure 1. Model of the facilitators and hindrances to a successful job carving process.

Appendix A

INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM**Study Title: Focus Groups on Job Carving and Disability****Research Investigators:**

Dr. Ian R. Gellatly
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 780-492-5823

Dr. Silvia Bonaccio
 Telfer School of Management
 University of Ottawa
 Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5
 bonaccio@telfer.uOttawa.ca
 613-562-5800 x4690

Background

You are being invited to participate in a research project on the process of job carving as it involves individuals with disabilities. We are asking for your participation because of your employment expertise and your work at [name of organization]². This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to study what makes for a successful job carving experience for employees with disabilities as well as employers.

Study Procedures

We will be conducting 45-minute focus groups with [name of organization] staff. A separate focus groups with employers will also take place. The focus groups will take place in March 2017, and we estimate that 8 to 10 [name of organization] staff members will participate. The focus group will be tape recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed. During the focus group, only first names will be used. Once the recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed and all names will be removed from the transcripts. Only pseudonyms will be used to identify quotes from the transcripts.

Benefits

Your participation in this study will be of great benefit to the study of employment and disability. People with disabilities continue to have lower levels of employment (in terms of both quality and quantity of employment). Job carving might be a way to increase the quality of employment but very little is known about this practice. Our goal is to collect information about job carving so that it can be shared in the academic and practitioner-oriented publications. Participation in this study may also be of benefit to you as it will give you an opportunity to reflect with coworkers about what makes for a positive job carving experience. We will also give participants a \$10 gift card as a small token of our appreciation.

² The company name is redacted to preserve the confidentiality of the organization but appeared in the original consent forms in the data collection.

Risk

There are minimal risks to your participation. You may worry that your views and experiences will be judged by others if they were to be made public. We will do our utmost to protect your confidentiality but because the focus group involves others we cannot guarantee it. The information we collect from the focus group will be attributable to the group, and when we identify quotes or ideas to one person in the group we will use pseudonyms. We will also ask the group to respect everyone's confidentiality, however there is a small risk that not everyone will honour this request.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There will be no negative consequences of choosing not to participate, within your workplace or elsewhere. You may choose not to participate at any point during the focus group, and you may leave at any time. Even if you participate in the focus group, you may ask that we not use your views or words in our presentations and publications afterwards. Please note that once we have submitted our results for publication (which we estimate to be in December 2017) you will not be able to withdraw from the study. You will have the opportunity to review our report before we submit it for publication.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

We will use this research for presentations at academic conferences and to community groups, as well as for research articles. A summary of our findings may also be distributed through the CDPP newsletter and website. You will never be personally identified when we discuss this research project. All data will be kept confidential; only members of the research team will have access to it.

Your anonymity cannot be guaranteed because other staff members of [name of organization] will also be present during the focus group. We will however do our utmost to preserve the confidentiality of what is said, and will ask all the focus group participants to do the same. Only first names will be used during the focus group. Once the recordings are transcribed, the names will be replaced by pseudonyms, and the recordings will be destroyed. The transcripts will be stored securely on password-protected computers for a minimum of nine years following the completion of the research project. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the research findings, please provide your email or mailing address below.

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The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta and at the University of Ottawa. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Consent Statement

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Participant's Name (printed) and Signature

Date

Name (printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Information about the results

Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the study's results.
Please send them to me at this email address (please print clearly)

INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM

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Research Investigators:

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Background

You are being invited to participate in a research project on the process of job carving as it involves individuals with disabilities. We are asking for your participation because of your previous involvement with [name of organization]. This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to study what makes for a successful job carving experience for employees with disabilities as well as employers.

Study Procedures

We will be conducting 45-minute focus groups with representatives from companies who have participated in the job-carving process. A separate focus groups with staff members of [organization name] will also take place. The focus group will take place in March 2017, and we estimate that 8 to 10 company representatives (owners, HR personnel, etc.) will participate. The focus groups will be tape recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed. During the focus group, only first names will be used. Once the recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed and all names will be removed from the transcripts. Only pseudonyms will be used to identify quotes from the transcripts.

Benefits

Your participation in this study will be of great benefit to the study of employment and disability. People with disabilities continue to have lower levels of employment (in terms of both quality and quantity of employment). Job carving might be a way to increase the quality of employment but very little is known about this practice. Our goal is to collect information about job carving so that it can be shared in the academic and practitioner-oriented publications. Participation in this study may also be of benefit to you as it will give you an opportunity to reflect with representatives from other organizations about what makes for a positive job carving experience. We will also give participants a \$10 gift card as a small token of our appreciation.

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Voluntary Participation

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Participant's Name (printed) and Signature

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Name (printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Information about the results

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Appendix B

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

NOTE: TEXT WRITTEN IN ITALICIZED BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS CONSTITUTES ADDITIONAL REMINDERS MEANT TO GUIDE THE FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR ONLY.

REVIEW INFORMED CONSENT FORM AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT IT. COLLECT SIGNED CONSENT FORMS AND ENSURE THAT PARTICIPANTS HAVE A COPY OF THE LETTER OF INFORMATION TO TAKE WITH THEM]

Confidentiality: [***READ ALOUD***] Before we begin our discussion of job carving, I want to spend a few moments **talking about confidentiality** and to go over some basic ground rules for our focus group discussion today:

- Everyone's views are welcomed and important.
- All voices are to be heard, so I will step in if too many people are speaking at once or to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak.
- I may also step in if I feel the conversation is straying off topic.
- The information which we will collect today will be attributable (*connected or associated*) to you as a group.
- If we quote specific ideas that are shared with us today, we will use a pseudonym, so that your individual identity is not known to readers of our report.
- Your position will also be identified in general terms.
- Once the report is ready, we will reach out to you to share our findings so that you can make sure we captured your thoughts accurately.
- We *are* assuming that when we learn about one another's views, they remain confidential. In a small group like this, people are identifiable to some degree by their views and opinions.
- Having said this, and having made these requests, you know that we cannot guarantee that the request will be honored by everyone in the room. We hope everyone will honor it.
- So, we are asking you to make only those comments that you would be comfortable making in a public setting; and to hold back making comments that you would not say publicly.
- Anything heard in the room should stay in the room.
- After the discussion, I will invite you to fill in an anonymous "post-workgroup information sheet" to help us generally describe the kind of people who were part of the group today.
- You can expect this discussion group to last about 45 minutes.

Use of Tape Recorder

- As you will recall, this focus/discussion group will be recorded to increase accuracy and to reduce the chance of misinterpreting what anyone says.
- All tapes and transcripts will be kept under lock and key by the researcher.
- Names will be removed from transcripts. Pseudonyms will be used in the research report instead of names. Participants will have pseudonyms attached to their name which only the research team will know.

- Only I and my co-researchers will have access to transcripts (with personal names removed) of this focus group.
- For transcription purposes, I might remind you to say your first name for the first few times you speak so that when we're transcribing the tape I can get used to recognizing your voice. That will ensure we assign the correct pseudonym to each person's answers. I will give you a gentle reminder if necessary.
- If you use names of people who work with [name of organization], we'll give them a pseudonym in the transcriptions.
- I'll also ask that when using abbreviations or acronyms, you say the full name at least once to aid transcription.
- We may also use a "flip chart" to write down key points during the focus group and take notes.

[AT THIS POINT, GROUP MEMBERS CAN QUICKLY INTRODUCE THEMSELVES – remind them that it is 'first names only'.]

[HAND OUT CDPP PENS AND PADS FOR PARTICIPANTS TO JOT NOTES DOWN.]

II. INTERVIEW

1. As a starting point, what does job carving mean to you?
 - i. Go around the room
2. Could you describe a positive job carving experience you were involved in?
3. Describe an ideal job carving scenario.
4. What do you see as the main facilitators of a successful job-carving process?
 - a. Relationships; what are the discussions taking place with managers/employers, coworkers, and the focal employee
5. What do you see as the main hindrances of a successful job carving process?
 - a. Relationships; what are the discussions taking place with managers/employers, coworkers, and the focal employee
6. What does a job-carving process look like (i.e., step-by-step)?
 - a. When does it take place?
 - b. Who is involved?
 - c. What is the content of the carving?
 - d. Why initiated?
7. Is there anything we forgot or something important that we should know about job carving?
8. Wrap-up:
 - a. Introduce the following anonymous “post-workgroup information sheet” now.
 - b. Remind participants that “what is said in the room should stay in the room”.
 - c. Thank the participants

Appendix C

Job Carving Study
FOCUS GROUP BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Please fill in this that will provide us with some basic background information about you.

1. I'm a (Check one):
 - Man
 - Woman
 - You don't have an option that applies to me. I identify as _____

2. I'm (Check one):
 - between the ages of 18-29
 - between the ages of 30-39
 - between the ages of 40-49
 - between the ages of 50-59
 - 60 or over

3. How long have you worked at your current organization? (Check one)
 - 6 months to less than 2 years
 - 2 to less than 5 years
 - 5 to less than 10 years
 - more than 10 years

4. How long have you worked in your current position/job? (Check one)
 - 6 months to less than 2 years
 - 2 to less than 5 years
 - 5 to less than 10 years
 - more than 10 years

5. Do you have a disability? (Check one)
 - Yes
 - No

6. If yes, how would you describe it (Check more than one or specify, if applicable):
 - Developmental
 - Dexterity
 - Flexibility
 - Hearing
 - Learning
 - Memory
 - Mental/psychological

Mobility

Pain

Seeing

Other – specify

Appendix D

INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM

Job Carving and Disability

Research Investigators

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Student Investigator

Jennifer Ho
 University of Ottawa
 Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5
 [email address]³

Background: You are being invited to participate in a research project on the process of job carving as it involves individuals with disabilities. We are asking for your participation because of your employment expertise and your work within your organization. This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to study what makes for a successful job carving experience for employees with disabilities as well as employers.

Study Procedures: We will be conducting a series of 30-minute interviews with staff members from organizations providing employment support to people with disabilities, as well as with representatives from companies who have hired employees with disabilities. The interview will be tape recorded, and the recordings will be transcribed. Once the recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed and all names will be removed from the transcripts. Only pseudonyms will be used to identify quotes from the transcripts.

Benefits: Your participation in this study will be of great benefit to the study of employment and disability. People with disabilities continue to have lower levels of employment (in terms of both quality and quantity of employment). Job carving might be a way to increase the quality of employment but very little is known about this practice. Our goal is to collect information about job carving so that it can be shared in the academic and practitioner-oriented publications. Participation in this study may also be of benefit to you as it will give you an opportunity to reflect about what makes for a positive job carving experience. We will also give participants a \$10 gift card as a small token of our appreciation.

Risk: There are minimal risks to your participation. You may worry that your views and experiences will be judged by others if they were to be made public. We will do our utmost to protect your confidentiality but we cannot absolutely guarantee it. We will never use your name or your organization's name in our reports or in conversations with anyone. However, we are sometimes identifiable through the stories we tell. Please keep this in mind through the interview.

³ The email address is redacted but appeared in the original consent forms in the data collection.

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INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM

Job Carving and Disability

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The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta and at the University of Ottawa. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Consent Statement

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Participant's Name (printed) and Signature

Date

Name (printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Information about the results

Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the study's results.
Please send them to me at this email address (please print clearly)
