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## **Job crafting and work meaning in penal institutions as the conditions of the vocational well-being among prison officers**

The objective of this paper is to broaden the knowledge of the selected conditions and outcomes of job crafting among prison employees. Attention was drawn to the chosen subject (work meaning) and situation (job crafting) conditions of the employees' well-being. Notwithstanding the presence of strict rules constituting the prison system functions, it was proved that the phenomenon of job crafting in this employee group exists as well as the practical implications of the impact exerted by the specific proactive behaviours among superiors and subordinates focused on their own job crafting or personal crafting.

**Key words:** job crafting, work meaning, employee well-being, prison system.

### **Introduction**

Job crafting in the prison system is a complex issue. The specificity of this highly stressful work<sup>1</sup> makes it necessary to look at the methods of supporting employees in improving their work in the conditions of required special service subordination, everyday confrontation with difficult situations and personal safety threats which lead to an occupational stress.

The profession of a Prison Service Officer is listed in the catalogue of difficult and dangerous professions of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy. It is characteristic for specific requirements as to psycho-physical

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<sup>1</sup> A. Piotrowski, *Occupational stress and conflicts between the work and family of the prison service medical personnel*, "Przegląd Naukowo-Metodyczny. Edukacja dla Bezpieczeństwa" 2014, No 2, pp.295-306.

capabilities, a consent to fulfil duties threatening life and health and high mental strain. Mental strain is caused, among other things, by a high responsibility level, continuous availability, shift work, excessive duties, fulfilling tasks under time pressure and under the pain of penal liability for omissions and mistakes<sup>2</sup>. The subordination and the specific style of the formation management, which affect interpersonal relationships, are at the same time factors influencing the vocational well-being of prison employees. This list ought to include also the everyday exposure of the prison staff to extraordinary events, such as suicide attempts or suicides among prisoners, self-mutilations, riots, hunger strikes, undesired behaviours among prisoners based on their affiliation in informal criminal sub-cultures, escape attempts, collective outbreaks and physical assault threats. In this situation, it is crucial to note the symptoms of the proactive attitude among prison employees when performing their duties<sup>3</sup> and making their work more personal in order to ensure themselves with optimal working conditions and to counteract the negative mental strain. The proactive job crafting leads to the better use of the employee's psycho-social potential, increasing job satisfaction and it builds involvement<sup>4</sup> and affects positively the well-being in the work place<sup>5</sup>.

After browsing the databases: Ebsco, Google Scholar, Researchgate with the use of the following key words: job crafting, work meaning, vocational well-being among prison officers, no publication was indicated. It means that the psychology literature lacks studies concerning these issues in this vocational group. The job crafting phenomenon among prison employees has not been discussed in the source literature although in the light of the recent psychological research it appears to enlarge its impact in relation to supporting the grassroots initiatives of employees in the aspect of perceiving their own work as meaningful, important and purposeful, and setting a new direction in the employee's self-development process.

The hitherto research confirms that persuading employees into pro-activity usually contributes an individualisation component to their

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<sup>2</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>3</sup> K. Ślebarska, *A way to get a job. Proactive resourcefulness compared to searching for a job and adapting to a new work place*, University of Silesia Publishing House, Katowice 2017, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> J.van Wingerden, A.B. Bakker, D. Derks, *Fostering employee well-being via job crafting intervention*. "Journal of Vocational Behavior" 2017, No 100, pp.164-174.

<sup>5</sup> E. Demerouti, A.B. Bakker., J.R.B. Halbesleben, *Productive and counterproductive job crafting: a daily diary study*, "Journal of Occupational Health Psychology" 2015, 20 (4), pp. 457-469.

duties, and motivates them to take a bottom-up strategy in order to craft their tasks, relationships and work perception<sup>6</sup>. Tasks modification, since it is undertaken in the spirit of one's own invention, leads to the highly realised achievement of targets in agreement with one's own preferences, motivation and passion, which are the work aspects desired by every employer<sup>7</sup>.

Working at a penal institution requires actions based on the strict rules of organisational culture and functioning in a formalised and military institution<sup>8</sup>. The rules constituting the operations of the prison system ought to include not only the introduction of new technologies, facilitating the functioning of this formation, but also so called psychological factor understood as entrusting the employees with more initiative and autonomy. Work meaning, generating a need for making efforts, more autonomy and freedom in the crafting of tasks, relationships, work perception and positive impact, bring in better effects within work satisfaction, well-being and productivity. According to the theory by F. Herzberg, focusing on the work internal properties constitutes an additional motivation factor<sup>9</sup>. Thus, work enrichment is postulated, which means expanding work so that an employee has a chance to play a more important role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of its own work, which ensure the increase in the level of work satisfaction and motivation to work<sup>10</sup>.

Job crafting competences, in most cases, allow for developing skills important in terms of their usefulness in the service (the efficient fulfilment of tasks, the skilful building of relationships and abandoning toxic relationships, maintaining one's own motivation based on the sincere interest and involvement). Job crafting, which means job re-defining, sometimes remains in opposition to the imposed action rules and vocational development directions, which is accompanied by the lack of the profound analysis of initiatives on the part of the employee. Job crafting leads to the improvement of service quality and safety and better well-being of employees. The proper demonstrating of its possibilities to an

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<sup>6</sup> A. Wrzesniewski, N. Lobuglio, J.E. Dutton, J.M. Berg, *Job crafting and cultivating positive meaning and identity in work*, "In Advances in Positive Organizational Psychology" 2013, (1).

<sup>7</sup> P.W. Lichtenthaler, A. Fischbach, *The conceptualization and measurement of job crafting: Validation of a German version of the job crafting scale*. "Zeitschrift Fur Arbeits Und Organisationspsychologie" 2016, b60(4), 173-186.

<sup>8</sup> The Act of 9 April 2010 on Prison Service (Journal of Laws 2010, No 79, item 523), p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> M. Mazur, *Motivating employees as an essential element of organisation management*, "Nauki Społeczne" 2013, 2(8), pp. 156-182.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

employee by means of entrusting it with a dose of autonomy indicates that superiors trust such an employee and it maintains the employee's picture of itself as having realistic impact on its work. It is important that the employees at all the levels are motivated to take from their own creativity and personal initiative in modelling their work tasks, also in highly hierarchical institutions because nowadays individualism seems to be a model desired in pursuing the joint goals of organisation members<sup>11</sup>.

In the recent years, the prison system in Poland has focused on reforming the institution management system through introducing a series of new solutions and determining, even in a more detailed manner, the direction of this organisation development. According to the research on work motivation and professional qualifications improvement, this process must also involve the psychological aspects<sup>12</sup>. Thus, this article is an attempt to find an answer to a question whether job crafting is possible in the Polish prison system and whether it affects the work of officers positively.

## Well-being in a work place

The notion of mental well-being in the source literature comprises two main approaches: eudemonistical and hedonist also known as subjective. The concept of well-being refers to the advantageous elements of a situation experienced by a person. Vocational well-being may be defined with reference to the type of work and work environment, and it constitutes the subjective evaluation of one's own professional life. Hence, employee well-being, in the individual and global dimension, may be viewed as a phenomenon characteristic for subjective feelings concerning everyday life and it means a positive state connected with the evaluation of one's own life and emotions experienced at work. Vocational well-being is related to the eudemonistical approach rather than hedonistic one, because the feeling of work meaning and job value appear to affect clearly the

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<sup>11</sup> G. Bartkowiak, A. Krugielka, *Job crafting among Polish employees*. "Studia i Prace" 2018, No 52, pp. 187-197.

<sup>12</sup> R. Poklek, *Motivation to work and professional qualifications improvement among the prison staff in terms of the double-factor of motivation and hygiene concept by Frederick Irving Herzberg*, COSSW, Kalisz 2012, pp. 1-170.

picture of oneself, one's life and functioning as an employee, contrary to the positive emotional balance<sup>13</sup>.

The highest well-being level at work and in life is accomplished when person's actions are as much as possible compatible with the preferred values, what increases involvement in such actions and determines one's expression<sup>14</sup> and regards well-being as an individual's striving for perfection understood as exploiting one's own potential. It is worth underlining that well-being at work is affected significantly by the superiors' actions through including employees in the management process and familiarisation with subordinates' needs. The superiors' caring for a properly high level of employees' well-being contributes to the increase in efficiency among employees and their work satisfaction. Nevertheless, one must note that well-being improvement in any aspect not necessarily contributes to raising the level of the overall well-being because a factor disturbing this process may be, for instance, stress<sup>15</sup>. Furthermore, work-related requirements, poor interpersonal relationships, the ambiguity of the role fulfilled and, to a slightly lower extent, less control from superiors contribute to the decrease in employees' well-being<sup>16</sup>.

As far as the requirements-resources model (JD-R model) is concerned, physical, mental and environment demands in a work place determine employees' actions and exhaust energy resources and weaken health. Within this area, employees' efforts to the benefit of preserving one's own resources, enable the achievement of professional targets and maintaining a well-being level matching one's needs. This model assumes a different relationship of the respective types of job crafting with individual well-being and its functioning in the work environment. Extending the structural and social resources and raising requirements which are challenges is correlated positively with a proactive personality, work performance level, being convinced about one's own effectiveness, work satisfaction and work involvement<sup>17</sup>, and avoiding requirements correlates negatively with work satisfaction. The research as part of the

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<sup>13</sup> A. Czerw, *A psychological model of well-being at work – work value and meaning*. PWN, Warszawa 2017.

<sup>14</sup> C.D. Ryff, C.D. *Happiness is everything, or is it? Exploration of the meaning of psychological well-being*. "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" 1989, 57, pp. 1069-1081.

<sup>15</sup> L. Kozioł, A. Wojtowicz, *Selected management practices and employee well-being*. "Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Poznańskiej. Organizacja i Zarządzanie" 2018, (71), pp. 165-177.

<sup>16</sup> G. Kinman, A.J. Clements, J. Hart, *Job demands, resources and mental health among the UK prison officers*, "Occupational Medicine" 2017, No 67, pp. 456-460.

<sup>17</sup> A. Rogala, R. Cieślak, *A tool for measuring job crafting: the psychometric properties of the Polish version of the Job Crafting Scale*, "Medycyna Pracy" 2019, 70(4), pp. 445-457.

JD-R model demonstrates that work control, help from superiors and co-employees, role transparency, good relationships at work, a down-to-earth management team seem to have the key impact on work effectiveness<sup>18</sup>. Another well-being model, known as a vitamin model, appears to confirm the above and it is useful in the conceptualisation of employees condition management. It assumes the healthy balance of the features, such as: personal control, exploiting employee's capabilities and skills, requirements and objectives, work variety, expectations and assessment transparency, the level of social contacts remaining in the relationship with physical work safety. What is crucial here is supporting control, career perspective, fair treatment, and financial rewards granted to employees<sup>19</sup>.

## Work meaning

In numerous researches, the employee well-being level is related to work meaning. The more an employee feels the meaning of its work, the more frequently it takes responsibility for this process, referring to its own norms and standards, what results in the enhancement of one's own work satisfaction and willingness to maintain this state. And this place is the beginning of job crafting, which is an employee's initiative in shaping its work, improving for building up involvement<sup>20</sup>, and the increase in the employee's involvement undoubtedly is a profit for every organisation.

The concept of Hackman and Oldham<sup>21</sup> known as the work features model, as part of which the employee's work meaning consists in the variety of exploited skills, the coherence of the tasks fulfilled referring to a single objective and the degree of given work impact on an employee's life and work and on other people, affect greatly the building-up of the employee's involvement. Within this concept, it seems to be important that the sense of responsibility for the results of one's own work is a derivative of autonomy provided from an employer within job crafting

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<sup>18</sup> E. Demerouti, A.B. Bakker, F. Nachreiner, W.B. Schaufeli, *The job demands-resources model of burnout*, "Journal of Applied Psychology" 2001, 86, pp. 499-512.

<sup>19</sup> E. Hornowska, A. Gąsiorowska, B. Bajcar, A. Borkowska, A. Czerw, *Tests in career counselling*, the Publishing House of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Department of Labour Market, Warszawa 2006.

<sup>20</sup> A. Czerw, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> J.R. Hackman, G.R. Oldham, *Job crafting*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1980.

and its procedures (the sense of freedom and control). Whereas, information on employee's high work effectiveness leads to information on subjective effectiveness. Hence, a question may be posed about factors building-up the employees' work meaning. Firstly, there is the adequate perception of oneself in the context of the organisation objectives and one's own role, outlined transparently from the top, in the implementation of the organisation's mission. According to the authors of the mentioned last concept, what is useful here, is the support from superiors who, by means of informing employees on the organisation's mission, contribute to the escalation of a sense that their tasks are meaningful<sup>22</sup>. It is similar when employees' autonomous actions are redirected to actions on a global scale to the benefit of others, for instance, a group of employees. Whereas, introducing more difficult tasks<sup>23</sup> causes both the increase in the employee's development willingness (with new tasks) and the increase in feeling more competent in a society (with routine tasks).

The global dimension of work meaning refers to advantages arising from influencing other people. Employees regarding their own work as a vocation find it meaningful more frequently. Altruistic actions fulfil a similar function, which contributes largely to maintaining the vocational well-being. What is significant here, is the persistence in perceiving work meaning and cohesive reference to personal values and advantages, such as attaching more meaning to one's own life through the adequate work meaning perception leading to the development and accomplishment of personal targets. This way of understanding work meaning is similar to the eudemonistical well-being dimension, determining clearly the human life harmony through the coherence with one's own self<sup>24</sup>. An organisation supporting the relationships of employees who feel important but also the relationships of employees with clients, contribute to the intensification of work meaning. Actions supporting employees foster devising the joint concept of achieving professional goals. Therefore, it is worth underlining here that the growth in work meaning is affected both by the bottom-up employees' initiatives and the bottom-down initiatives undertaken by the management team.

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<sup>22</sup> M.F. Steger, B.J. Dik, R.D. Duffy, *Measuring Meaningful Work: The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI)*. "Journal of Career Assessment" 2012, 20 (3), pp. 322-337.

<sup>23</sup> J. Ciecuch, *The measurement of a value in the modified Shalom Schwartz model*. "Psychologia Społeczna" 2013, 1(124), pp. 22-41.

<sup>24</sup> M. Puchalska-Kamińska, A. Czerw, M. Roczniowska, *Work meaning in self and World perspective: a new outlook on the WAMI scale*, "Social Psychological Bulletin" 2019, 14(1), pp. 2-29.



Expressing oneself connected with self-fulfilment constitutes a significant source of well-being. When an employee fulfils tasks at work which are consistent with its own attitudes and values, the level of work meaning also grows. This concept assumes<sup>25</sup> that work meaning is increased by a conviction that work is performed to the benefit of the social welfare and it is beneficial for the subject. Moreover, one's own work perceived as a mission may also lead to the increase in work meaning through enhancing motivation<sup>26</sup>. The *pro publico bono* actions also raise the level of work meaning and affect the well-being level in the long run. Thus, a hypothesis may be posed that also in penal institutions **(H1) work meaning among officers affects their well-being level**. Work is perceived as fulfilling tasks in the organisation surroundings context, determined by organisation activities, what contributes to the fact that an employee may have a micro and macro perspective of its work meaning – as a work mission and fulfilling an institutional role<sup>27</sup>.

## Job crafting

Job crafting involves the bottom-up employee strategy which is derived from the concept of Wrzesniewski and Dutton<sup>28</sup>. In their approach, the authors grant employees with autonomy in work improvement and enhancement. Job crafting is initiated by the employee itself and it is aimed at satisfying its needs and acting to the benefit of higher work meaning<sup>29</sup>. This is about initiatives in three strategic areas: task crafting, relational crafting and cognitive crafting.

The first dimension refers to procedures and instructions, the second dimension is connected with other employees, and the third one consists in job crafting which results in higher work meaning<sup>30</sup>. The above must be accompanied by autonomy in introducing such changes into one's

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<sup>25</sup> M.F. Steger, B.J. Dik, R.D. Duffy, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> E. Kasprzak, M. Michalak, M Minda, *Job crafting questionnaire - KKP*. Polish adaptation of the tool, "Psychologia Społeczna" 2017, 12(43), pp. 459-475.

<sup>27</sup> M. Puchalska, A. Czerw, *Work meaning – what is it and how to support it?* [in:] *Management based on evidence. Theory and practice*, ed. by T. Chirkowska-Smolak, A. Hauziński, 2018, pp. 55-64.

<sup>28</sup> J. Berg, J. Dutton, A. Wrzesniewski, *What is Job Crafting and Why Does It Matter?* 2008.

<sup>29</sup> M. Rocznińska, S. Retowski, *The Polish adaptation of the Job Crafting Scale*, 2016, Unpublished manuscript (an excerpt provided by the author).

<sup>30</sup> A. Wrzesniewski, N. Lobuglio, J.E. Dutton, J.M. Berg, *Job crafting and cultivating positive meaning and identity in work*. "In Advances in Positive Organizational Psychology" 2013, 1.



own work. As far as tasks are concerned, modification is to refer to work so that activities are organised better and enable an employee to use its strong points. Relational crafting consists in integration with other employees or reduction in the frequency of unnecessary contacts. The relational dimension involves toxic acquaintances with a low contribution to the individual's everyday functioning, and requiring additional involvement and time. This is important in particular in the case of working under time pressure. Modifications within relationships and tasks may be introduced upon objectives crafting and (or) its meaning to an employee, that is after changing work perception<sup>31</sup>. Sometimes it may happen that a change within the task area will not generate a change in thinking about work or changes in relationships with other employees, and most frequently it takes place in the case of strongly structured and routinized work environment or when an employee has little autonomy.

Job crafting has its source in the employee's availability conditions and in a work situation. Availability is strictly connected with the ability to notice changes by an employee, what results from its proactive attitude, curiosity and flexible approach. The situation of job crafting takes its origin from the specification of work and the organisation itself. The following dimensions are important here: the degree of task structuring, task variability, the autonomy of the assigned vocational role, and in other words, autonomy in the workstation, or the flexibility of procedures and tools. The possibility of predicting work tasks and conditions variability, determining the specification of currently performed work, exert an essential impact on job crafting. Thus, this is about the permanent employee's tendency to a specific behaviour with reference to improving its own work and perceiving the possibilities of organisational and task-related modification of its course. The job crafting process is conditioned by the employee's willingness and ability to notice a need for change in the manner of fulfilling current tasks and possibilities for such a change, what belongs to the proactive personality traits determining the ability of job crafting<sup>32</sup>. The factors important in job crafting used effectively include: orientation at vocation, development at work, social values and a need for searching for the meaning of one's own work and

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<sup>31</sup> E. Kasprzak, M. Michalak, M Minda, *Job crafting questionnaire - KKP*. Polish adaptation of the tool, "Psychologia Społeczna" 2017, 12(43), pp. 459-475.

<sup>32</sup> B. Kwiatkowski, B., The proactive construction of future in prison isolation, "Przegląd Więziennictwa Polskiego" 2016, No 93, pp. 43-60.

making it meaningful. Job crafting according to the Dutch psychologists, i.e. the resources-requirements (JD-R model), considers job redefining as an individual and proactive approach to the benefit of extending resources available to an employee (e.g. increasing task diversity, striving for a larger decisiveness scope) and lowering requirements (e.g. avoiding emotionally burdening situations or people<sup>33</sup>). According to the requirements-resources model, job crafting fulfils the role of a (personal and organisational) resources predictor. Whereas, these resources constitute a work involvement predictor. This relationship is moderated by work requirements: high resources allow for predicting high involvement in work particularly when the work requirements level is high as well. The research results confirm the positive relationship between job crafting and resources, work requirements and work involvement<sup>34</sup>.

The assumptions of the majority of the cited job crafting concepts have the validity of the employee's application of autonomous and proactive actions in order to ensure higher work meaning and better work adaptation. Other benefits arising from job crafting, according to the research conducted, include the increase in satisfaction, productivity and involvement among employees<sup>35</sup>. A positive effect includes also the observed growth in the employees motivation and skills within job crafting. Owing to the systematic application of job crafting, employees have the real influence on the adequate perception of their own strong points, preferred activities and values, and they also devise action plans which support them in the more complete application of their resources at work<sup>36</sup>. Thus, we can pose a hypothesis here that also in penal institutions **(H2) job crafting affects the increase in the well-being at work.**

Job crafting is the indication of pro-activity because an initiative is on the part of an employee who implements and repeats such an activity systematically, also in difficulties. An employee is free in its actions as a result of making itself independent from the pressure of a role defined

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<sup>33</sup> J. Hetland, H. Hetland, A.B. Bakker, E. Demerouti, *Daily transformational leadership and employee job crafting: The role of promotion focus*, "European Management Journal" 2018, 36(6), pp. 746-756.

<sup>34</sup> A. Rogala, R. Cieślak, *A tool for measuring job crafting: the psychometric properties of the Polish version of the Job Crafting Scale*, "Medycyna Pracy" 2019, 70(4), pp. 445-457.

<sup>35</sup> E. Vanbelle, A. Van den Broeck, H. De Witte, *Taking the purpose of job crafting into account: Development and validation of an overarching scale*. Paper Presented at the 11th Conference of the European Academy of Occupational Health, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> J. Berg, J. Dutton, A. Wrzesniewski, op. cit.

by co-employees<sup>37</sup>. Therefore, job crafting is more accessible for employees in higher organisational hierarchies, what is confirmed in the surveys carried out in the population of managers and subordinates, where the managers demonstrated a higher degree of job crafting involvement<sup>38</sup>. Thus, a hypothesis may be posed here that also in penal institutions **(H3) employees in managerial positions reveal a higher level of work meaning, vocational well-being and job crafting compared to lower hierarchy employees**. Considering the above theoretical discussions, it is justified to extend the hitherto knowledge with the research results concerning job crafting in the uniformed services environment.

## Method

Since the scientific research demonstrates the profits of applying job crafting with reference to other professions, this study constitutes an attempt to answer a question whether in the work of the Prison Service officers, work meaning affects considerably the level of well-being in a work place or whether it is possible to apply a new job crafting method for the build-up of vocational well-being. Furthermore, it was important to determine whether there is a difference in the group of superiors and subordinates in respect of the well-being level and job crafting intensity.

## Variables operationalisation

The hypotheses posed consider the following variables: employee well-being, work meaning and job crafting. The intensity degree of the respective variables was measured by means of a separate questionnaire with high psychometric parameters, dedicated to each of them.

The questionnaire concerning the well-being in a work place (KDMP) (Czerw, 2017) is used to measure the well-being by means of four dimensions (scales), where the sum in the respective scales allows to estimate the global vocational well-being level of a person participating in the

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<sup>37</sup> J.M. Berg, J.E. Dutton, A. Wrzesniewski, *What is job crafting and why does it matter?* (2008) Retrieved from the website of Positive Organisational Scholars on April 15, 2011.

<sup>38</sup> M. Roczniowska, M. Puchalska-Kamińska, *Are managers also "crafting leaders"? The link between organizational rank, autonomy, and job crafting*, "Polish Psychological Bulletin" 2017, 48(2), pp. 198-211.

test. The scale consists of 44 items: 12 items – positive organisation (e.g. “The organisation where I work has more advantages than disadvantages”), 10 items - adaptation and development (e.g. “I feel that my work is important”), 13 items - positive relationships with other employees (e.g. “My relationships with other employees are good”), 8 items - contribution to the organisation (e.g. “My company obtains measurable profits owing to my work”). The subjects had to respond to the statements in the seven-degree scale of an agreement (from 1 – I disagree totally to 7 – I agree totally). The reliability indicator, alpha Cronbach, for the entire questionnaire is 0.92.  $\alpha$ -Cronbach coefficient for the scales Positive organisation was ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ); Adaptation and development ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ), Positive relationships ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ), Contribution to the organisation ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ). The global vocational well-being indicator was used in the research.

The WAMI questionnaire (the Work and Meaning Inventory) by Stieger et al., 2012 (in the Polish adaptation Czerw et al., 2018) measuring the work meaning based on three dimensions: positive meaning, building a meaning through work and motivation to more good, consists of 10 items: 6 items referring to the work meaning in the personal perspective (e.g. “I chose a professional path which is meaningful”), 4 items of work meaning in the global perspective (e.g. “I know that my work makes the world better”). The subjects responded to the statements in five-degree scale determining the frequency of a given feeling and behaviour occurrence: from 0 – definitely untrue to 5 – definitely true). The alpha Cronbach accuracy indicator for the entire work meaning questionnaire is 0.90, and for sub-scales it is: personal perspective = 0.92, global perspective = 0.88.

The PP questionnaire – Job crafting scale (Roczniewska and Retowski, 2016) created through the adaptation of the JCS test (Job Crafting Scale) based on the JD-R model (the Job Demand-Resources Model), is a tool for measuring proactive work changes, made spontaneously by an employee in order to improve effectiveness and work satisfaction (job crafting). The questionnaire includes 21 items for measuring job crafting in the following four areas: 5 items referring to the scale of increasing structural resources (e.g. “I try to learn new things at work”;  $\alpha = 0.83$ ), 5 items – increasing social resources (e.g. “I ask my colleagues for advice”;  $\alpha = 0.67$ ), 5 items of increasing challenges (e.g. “When at work there is hardly anything to do, I see it as an occasion for launching new projects

”;  $\alpha = 0.84$ ), 6 items – avoiding challenges (e.g. “I try to avoid taking too many difficult decisions at work”;  $\alpha = 0.75$ ).  $\alpha$ -Cronbach accuracy indicator for the entire questionnaire PP is  $\alpha = 0.78$ . The subjects responded to the statements in five-degree scale determining the frequency of a given feeling and behaviour occurrence: from 1 – never to 5 – often).

Also in this research, the method accuracy indicators are satisfactory, the lowest value is  $\alpha = 0.691$ , and the highest value is  $\alpha = 0.923$  (Table 3).

## The subjects and the procedure

$N = 135$  officers of the Prison Service in Lublin region participated in the research. The subjects were selected in layers in order to represent all the employment categories (superiors and subordinates; women and men; various education levels) in the sample in a properly high number, according to the employment proportions in the prison system. Participation in the research was voluntary. The participants filled in the set of tests at work: WAMI questionnaire, PP questionnaire, KDMP and short personal information. The personal information included questions about the age, sex, education, civil status, seniority in the SW and: job position, corpse, employment department, work system (single or multi-shift), working establishment type, number of absences, number of holidays and overtime. The questionnaires return level was 98%. At the time of data entering, seven incorrectly filled in or illegible questionnaires were rejected, what constitutes 5.18% of the total returned questionnaires.

## Results

The data concerning the test sample specification are presented in Table 1 and 2. The majority of the subjects was constituted by men – more than 71% in relation to nearly 29% women. Most subjects, over 85.2%, were in non-managerial positions, and the majority fulfilled the service in the protective division (57%). As to education, 47.4% was constituted by subjects with higher education. The age of the respondents is characterised by the mean  $M = 36.28$ ,  $SD = 5.94$ . According to the data from the

Central Management Board of the Prison Service<sup>39</sup>, women constitute 23.1% of the total employees, the average age of the employed officers is 36-40 (28.3%), average work time is 10-14 of seniority, and 47.17% of the employed completed higher education. In the light of these data, it may be assumed that a research sample reflects approximately the demographic regularities in this professional group.

Table 1. The sample descriptive statistics

		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sex</b>	male	96	71.1
	female	39	28.9
<b>Education</b>	experience	3	2.2
	technical secondary school	22	16.3
	secondary	32	23.7
	higher education	64	47.4
	other	14	10.4
<b>Job position</b>	managerial	20	14.8
	non-managerial	115	85.2
<b>Employment department</b>	security	77	57
	penal	29	21.5
	quatermaster	3	2.2
	registers	15	11.1
	financial	3	2.2
	health care	5	3.7
	other	3	2

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for age, work time in the prison service (SW) and the total work time

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Age</b>	36.28	5.94
<b>Work time in SW</b>	9.49	4.67
<b>Total work time</b>	13.44	6.27

<sup>39</sup> Source: Information and Statistics Office CZSW

As well as in the general Polish population of the prison system employees<sup>40</sup>, in this research, most respondents (Table 2) were included within the range of 36-40 years old ( $M=36.28$ ), and the average work time was nearly 10 years ( $M=9.49$ ); whereas the subjects were active on the labour market on average for approx. 13 years ( $M=13.44$ ).

The analysis of a relationship between variables included in the research was limited to at least average correlation, according to J. Guilford's classification. The relationships inside constructs were not interpreted. The analysis demonstrates that the "work meaning in the personal perspective" is connected with the well-being level in relation to the component of "adaptation and development" ( $r=0.660$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "contribution to the organisation" ( $r=0.596$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "positive organisation" ( $r=0.578$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "positive relationships" ( $r=0.491$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

The "work meaning in the global perspective" is connected with the well-being level in relation to the component of "adaptation and development" ( $r=0.448$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "contribution to the organisation" ( $r=0.431$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "positive organisation" ( $r=0.371$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

The relationship analysis of the variable "work meaning in the personal perspective" is related to the job crafting level with reference to the component "increasing challenges" ( $r=0.418$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) and "increasing structural resources" ( $r=0.344$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

The relationship analysis of the well-being variable of "positive organisation" is related to the job crafting component "increasing social resources" ( $r=0.348$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "increasing challenges" ( $r=0.429$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). The well-being "positive organisation" is related to the job crafting component "increasing structural resources" ( $r=0.348$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "increasing challenges" ( $r=0.424$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). The well-being "positive relationships" is related to the job crafting component "increasing structural resources" ( $r=0.438$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), "increasing challenges" ( $r=0.366$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). The well-being "contribution to the organisation" is related to the job crafting component "increasing challenges" ( $r=0.457$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

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<sup>40</sup> Ibidem.



Table 3. Correlations

	M	SD	$\alpha$ <i>Crombach</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Crafting – increasing structural resources	3.91	0.65	0.706									
2. Job Crafting – increasing social resources	2.90	0.78	0.691	0.031								
3. Job Crafting – increasing challenges	3.30	0.71	0.725	0.579**	0.341***							
4. Job Crafting – avoiding requirements	2.80	0.70	0.725	-0.056	0.345***	0.019						
5. Work meaning – personal perspective	3.34	0.86	0.861	0.344***	0.123	0.418**	-0.140					
6. Work meaning – global perspective	2.99	0.69	0.678	0.147	0.110	0.241**	0.119	0.603***				
7. Well-being – positive organisation	4.27	1.15	0.906	0.243**	0.349***	0.429***	-0.088	0.578***	0.371***			
8. Well-being – compatibility and development	4.66	1.25	0.923	0.348***	0.138	0.424***	-0.156	0.660***	0.448**	0.799***		
9. Well-being – positive relationships	4.79	0.95	0.893	0.438***	0.128	0.366***	-0.048	0.491***	0.284**	0.709***	0.701***	
10. Well-being – contribution to the organisation	4.72	1.12	0.894	0.274**	0.140	0.457***	-0.119	0.596***	0.431***	0.714***	0.814***	0.578***

\*\*\* p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01

## The influence of the work meaning on the well-being

A regression analysis was conducted as part of which a clarification variable was the general indicator of well-being at work, and clarification variables were work meaning factors. The equation was statistically significant ( $F=61.73$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and the work meaning clarifies 47% of the well-being variance ( $R = 0.697$ ; corrected  $R$ -square =0.47).

Table 4. Regression analysis for the work meaning variable.

Work sense	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta ( $\beta$ )		
(constant)	70.772	11.933		5.931	0.000
WAMI personal perspective	4.259	0.667	0.514	6.386	0.000
WAMI global perspective	3.165	1.032	0.247	3.068	0.003

\*  $p<0.5$

According to the data presented in Table 4 for the component “work meaning”,  $\beta$  coefficients are significant with reference to the following factors: “WAMI personal perspective” ( $\beta=0.51$ ,  $t=6.38$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and “WAMI global perspective” ( $\beta=0.24$ ,  $t=3.08$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). It may be observed that in relation to the “work meaning” component, both factors are significant; whereas the “WAMI personal perspective” clarifies it more strongly. In both cases, the increase in work meaning is connected with the growth of well-being.

## The influence of job crafting on the well-being

A regression analysis was conducted as part of which a clarification variable was the general indicator of well-being at work, and clarification variables were work meaning factors. The equation was statistically significant ( $F= 11.94$ ;  $df=4$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and the work meaning clarifies 25% of the well-being variance ( $R = 0.52$ ; corrected  $R$ -square =0.25). The parameters of the respective relationships are included in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression analysis for the job crafting variable

Job crafting	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta ( $\beta$ )		
(constant)	92.398	24.879		3.714	0.000
Increasing structural resources	2.255	1.234	0.172	1.827	0.070
Increasing social resources	1.941	0.954	0.178	2.034	0.044
Increasing challenges	3.750	1.214	0.311	3.089	0.002
Avoiding challenges	-1.728	0.812	-0.171	-2.128	0.035

\*  $p < 0.05$

For the job crafting component, coefficients  $\beta$  are significant with relation to the following factors: “increasing challenges” ( $\beta=0.31$ ,  $t=3.08$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), “increasing social resources” ( $\beta=0.17$ ,  $t=2.03$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), “avoiding requirements” ( $\beta=-0.17$ ,  $t=-2.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It may be observed that in respect of the “job crafting” component, three factors are significant; whereas, it is clarified the strongest by “increasing challenges”. Nevertheless, the significance of increasing structural resources, although it did not reach the statistically important significance ( $\beta=0.17$ ,  $t=1.83$ ;  $p=0.07$ ), is very close to the criterion. Thus, we can talk about a tendency of exerting an impact on the well-being of this variable as well. However, this dependence must be treated with a large dose of caution. It is worth underlining that “avoiding challenges” behaves differently than the other job crafting factors. In this case, higher results in this scale are accompanied by a lower well-being level. In other cases, increasing resources or challenges leads to the well-being enhancement.

### Differences between job position levels

Table 6 includes the comparison of the results of job crafting means for two groups of positions considered in H3. An assumption that employees in managerial positions are characterised by a higher job crafting level as compared to their subordinates was confirmed only partially.

The managers obtained higher results only in the scale of increasing challenges ( $Z=2.21$ ;  $df=134$ ;  $p<0.0$ ). Managers often increase their challenges at work.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics – managerial vs. non-managerial positions

Variables	managerial		non-managerial		Z
	M	SD	M	SD	
Job Crafting – increasing structural resources	3.90	0.84	3.91	0.62	-0.09
Job Crafting – increasing social resources	2.97	0.81	2.89	0.78	0.36
Job Crafting – increasing challenges	3.69	0.86	3.23	0.66	<b>2.21*</b>
Job Crafting – avoiding requirements	2.68	0.84	2.82	0.68	-0.57

\*  $p<0.05$

## Discussion of the results

The objective of the research was to search for job auto-regulation mechanisms applied by the Prison Service officers through the demonstration of the impact on the subjectively perceived work meaning on the employee well-being. An important role in this relationship was played by the employee's proactive behaviour aimed at job enhancement, expressed by the job crafting construct.

Firstly, it was assumed that the work meaning among officers is related to the well-being level in a work place. In order to confirm the thesis of Puchalska-Kamińska, Czerw and Roczniowska (2019), according to which making our lives more meaningful through the adequate perception of the work meaning, leading to the development and implementation of personal objectives, results in the increase in the eudemonistical well-being level, the obtained results demonstrated that the subjective feelings among officers concerning the internal norms and standards as the component of the personal work meaning, were most connected with the general employee well-being, in particular, with the level of

being satisfied with one's own professional role and perceiving one's own development in such a role.

The research demonstrated the meaning of both work meaning dimensions for the vocational well-being level but it must be noted that the personal dimension was dominant. Taking into account the personal perspective of the work meaning, the employee's personal benefits must be mentioned here, such as making one's own life meaningful through work, creating oneself through striving for targets for one's own development, what exhausts the definition of the eudemonistical dimension of well-being (the maximisation of pleasures in life)<sup>41</sup>.

The work meaning in the global perspective, which had a slightly weaker impact than the personal one, refers to the degree in which an employee perceives its own work as bringing benefits to other people. People treating their own work as a vocation experience internal motivation for work more often if they declare a higher level of the work performance meaning. Whereas, altruistic actions which are characterised by disinterest and concentration on the needs of others, contribute to longer well-being<sup>42</sup>

It certainly depends on various factors perceived quite subjectively by an officer and it can be observed as "scoring to the same goal" phenomenon, that is taking endeavours to make the ideas and values of the service as an organisation cohesive with the values verbalised by its employees. It confirms the theory on the relationship of work with positive emotions among employees when fulfilling their tasks with higher work satisfaction and lower absence rate and higher quality of the tasks fulfilled<sup>43</sup>.

Well-being means a positive state connected with emotions at work which may be maximised by perception, above one's own goals and personal development, to the benefit of profits gained by other people. An employee may take care of the increase in work meaning through being involved in pro-social actions supported by the organisation, e.g. volunteer work<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> A. Czerw, op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>44</sup> J.B. Rodell, *Finding meaning through volunteering: why do employees volunteer and what does it mean to their jobs?* "Academy of Management Journal" 2013, 56(5), pp. 1274-1294.

A higher work meaning level, in the personal dimension, is consistent with the concept of the work meaning increase when fulfilling tasks corresponding to the attitudes and values. This means the subjective feeling of fulfilling tasks adequately to predispositions and the feeling of having the right profession and being in the right place. This conviction confirms that being in the position corresponding with the employee's needs and its values and beliefs, contributes to the increase in competences and the effective use of the work environment. On the other hand, it demonstrates the correct perception of resources with reference to the task difficulty degree, which an employee is able to fulfil, as well as being interested in the fulfilled tasks and eager to correct the context of tasks, and not the organisation (e.g. work change). An optimistic result was the relationship of the work meaning with, subsequently: the acceptance of properties constituting an organisation, the evaluation of one's own value in the context of an organisation and, to the lowest degree, with the factor of the assessment of relationships with other people in the context of the job performed.

With reference to the strength of the relationship of the work meaning with the first factor (positive organisation), what is important here is noticing the advantages and the strong points of an organisation as a trustworthy and conviction that its employees act to the benefit of common good, while considering a hazard and the presence of stress factors. It may be connected with the fact that this difficult job is performed by people selected in a recruitment process and specialised very well to fulfil the roles assigned, aware of their own limitations and possibilities, people who want to become involved and develop, and generate profits for the service. This is related to another scale of the evaluation of one's own value among officers in respect of an organisation and employee's conviction as to its own uniqueness and significance in fulfilling their roles in the organisation. What seems important here is the superiors' behaviour enabling their subordinates to achieve the assigned objectives and correct communication to their subordinates of the organisation's mission, which presented transparently provides the officers with the possibility of perceiving their role and allow for a broader perspective in relation to one's own actions in a work place<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> M.F. Steger, B.J. Dik, R.D. Duffy, *op. cit.*

Thus, it may be stated that due to the obvious reasons, the work meaning dimension exists in the inseparable connection with the interpersonal relations factor. "Employees are not only the passive recipients of the organisation's reality but they may perform transformations of their job (...) take an initiative towards matching their job with their own needs (...) and build the work meaning<sup>46</sup>. An officer may organise its own duties to make use of its strong points, it may affect the group's successes through relational crafting and craft cognitively its own work through perceiving its service in the category of profits for the society.

It was acknowledged that job crafting performed by an employee reinforces the level of well-being in a work place. Being authentic and authentically interested in the quality of the work carried out creates an opportunity for acting within the area of its adaptation to one's own needs, that is making it meaningful. The job crafting component – acting to the benefit of increasing challenges – was the most correlated with well-being. The assumption of the significance of professional tasks fulfilled by the employee for the well-being was confirmed.

The task-oriented activity of officers appears to be determined by their values, and together with a certain degree of autonomy, it means permanent confrontation with things important for them, which are meaningful. The autonomy of an officer in tasks crafting in the view of being aware of their significance degree affects the increase in a satisfaction level and being convinced about the meaningfulness of the job activities carried out.

As far as functioning in the prison system is concerned, if an official order which is understood by an officer and regarded as important also for itself, as a result of crafting, is carried out faster and more efficiently, better effects will be achieved which will result in specifying subsequent challenges. Moreover, everyday activities are regarded as monotonous, as a result of crafting (task job crafting) and referring to their own system of values, they become more important and valuable and thus performed more willingly. The autonomous sense of making a good use of their own

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<sup>46</sup> M. Roczniowska, S. Retowski, *The Polish adaptation of the Job Crafting Scale*, 2016, Unpublished Manuscript (excerpts provided by the author).



willingness and possessed skills must be a source of employee's well-being and a manner for its effective expression in job<sup>47</sup>.

This all affects the level of well-being because an employee which is satisfied at work experiences more positive emotions, it is happy and content more often, more inclined to be proud of its own accomplishments and it has a reason for subsequent crafting, namely, to craft the component of relationships with others (increasing social resources) in the work environment.

It was assumed in the research that the level of the employee well-being increases with the job crafting role, meaning considering one's own activity and flexibility in the fulfilment of job tasks. In order to clarify this thesis one must assume that job in the prison system is often connected with the necessity of autonomous tasks fulfilment in a job position, what in turn generates a need for autonomous planning, one's own and other employees' time management and the management of the quality of the tasks fulfilled. Job subordination is the fact which must be considered by every Prison System officer. Therefore, flexibility in adapting to job requirements with a high degree of personal hazard, appears to be crucial here and highly desired. And here is only one step to the validity of consolidating this proactive attitude, increasing the employees' influence on the manner in which tasks are fulfilled, i.e. direct questioning and obtaining information, aiming at obtaining a feedback, building the network of mutual contacts and negotiating job duties<sup>48</sup>. The above clarification is consistent with other theory considering the job crafting referring to the requirements which stimulate employees to improve the knowledge of their own possibilities and achieving more ambitious goals at work<sup>49</sup>. Moreover, the research among the employees of penal institutions demonstrated that the lowered level of fulfilling tasks is connected, among other things, with the lowered level of the overall well-being, additionally determined by the factor of the employee's individual tolerance<sup>50</sup>. In this place, it is worth underlining that being aware of the

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<sup>47</sup> J.F. Terelak, A. Borkowska, *Work satisfaction as the source of mental well-being among the Polish consumption emigrants in Canada*. "Studia Psychologica" 2007, 7.

<sup>48</sup> K. Ślebarska, R. Soucek, K. Moser, *Increasing Proactive Coping in Organizational Newcomers: Improving Job Adaptation or Rocking the Boat?* "Journal of Career Development" 2019, 46(3), pp. 295-313.

<sup>49</sup> M. Roczniowska, M. Puchalska-Kamińska, *Are managers also "crafting leaders"? The link between organizational rank, autonomy, and job crafting*, "Polish Psychological Bulletin" 2017, 48(2), pp. 198-211.

<sup>50</sup> E.J. Walker, C.A. Jackson, H.H.E. gan, M. Tonkin, *Workability and mental wellbeing among therapeutic prison officers*, "Occupational Medicine" 2015, 65, pp. 549-551.

requirements and complexity of tasks in the service in penal institutions affects considerably the tendency of shaping positive relationships in the service place<sup>51</sup>, because it is understood as an activity protecting against work strain. Employees performing job crafting through increasing their tasks act on their own to the benefit of creating challenges for themselves and these may be all the activities of a volunteer nature to the benefit of the organisation.

The research, demonstrating the strength of the relationship of job crafting and the sense of vocational well-being, signalled the need within the tasks also in relation to interpersonal relationships. This is reflected in the employee's better realising of the objectives and effects of its own activities, what causes a change in perceiving its own work by itself and a positive emotional balance, life satisfaction and a positive picture of itself and the surrounding environment feeling the sense of achieving the goals<sup>52</sup>. The dimensions of personal life, such as self-acceptance, self-fulfilment, a sense of autonomy and life purpose, relationships with others, are important here<sup>53</sup>. It was also assumed that employees in managerial positions are characterised by a higher level of life meaning, well-being at work and job crafting as compared to subordinates. The above assumption was confirmed and most of high results within the said variables were obtained by people in managerial positions. What was more important here was the personal perspective of work meaningfulness as a drive wheel for increasing challenges. Perhaps, it arises from the fact that a managerial position facilitates the use of skills, experience and seniority, as well as it allows for the active arrangement of the surrounding external world, the active management of the surrounding, and having extensive interpersonal relations. A higher position at work constitutes one of the foundations of controlling and creating the external environment, the achievement of one's own desires and needs, as well as an element fostering guiding one's own life goals<sup>54</sup>, what supports the specification of personal targets and setting adequate requirements.

A higher level of skilful job crafting by superiors is also connected with a seniority at work and thus experience, the number of taken training

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<sup>51</sup> G. Kinman, A.J. Clements, J. Hart, *Job demands, resources and mental health in UK prison officers*, "Occupational Medicine" 2017, 67, pp. 456-460.

<sup>52</sup> E. Kasprzak, M. Michalak, M. Minda, op. cit.

<sup>53</sup> A. Czerw, op. cit.

<sup>54</sup> J. Cieślińska, *The sense of well-being and life optimism among the managerial staff in educational establishments*, "Studia Edukacyjne" 2013, 27, pp. 95-112.

courses, the advanced skills of extending one's own competences and a skill of managing employees' talents. It suggests the validity of recognition and actions to the benefit of retaining employees with high competence potential, what seems to facilitate job crafting because modelling one's own job in a more autonomous manner requires trust and acceptance from a superior; this allows such an employee to explore wider the work environment and assign it with a new meaning. This results in the intensification of the subordinate's internal motivation and its efficiency on duty, which may be additionally consolidated as part of the motivation and remuneration system, that is: appreciating people creating their own work actively who are more involved in the actions to the benefit of the Prison Service. As it was also shown in the results of the tests carried out for other uniformed formations (policemen)<sup>55</sup>, in order to guarantee an officer's mental well-being, it is necessary that superiors assess them fairly, what enhances the officers' sense of autonomy in respect of actions taken on duty, it contributes to self-acceptance, self-control and the manner of shaping positive relationships in a conviction concerning professional development and making life more meaningful. All this seems to confirm the readiness of the uniformed services representatives to influence the shape of their own job. Officers motivated internally to undertake an additional activity or search for solutions exceeding the scope of their duties, demonstrating proactive behaviour at work, are extremely valuable to the Prison Service.

Referring to the proactivity theory<sup>56</sup>, it must be noted that proactive people (practising job crafting) make use of their strength of will and the ability to affect the environment. Their proactivity is demonstrated here as searching for the opportunities for change, while reaching beyond common patterns in order to realise goals. The employee's actions are enhanced through its accomplishments, with the simultaneous increase in the number of new actions, owing to which such people are usually perceived well in the work environment, because their proactive behaviour brings in measurable benefits not only to those practising crafting but also to the surroundings. In the prison service, proactive people seem to be

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<sup>55</sup> R. Rani, P. Garg, R. Rastogi, *Organisational justice and psychological wellbeing of police employees: a relationship study*, "International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics" 2012, 1 (5), pp. 183-194.

<sup>56</sup> K. Ślebarska, R. Soucek, K. Moser, *Increasing Proactive Coping in Organizational Newcomers: Improving Job Adaptation or Rocking the Boat?* "Journal of Career Development" 2019, 46(3), pp. 295-313.

very desired because owing to the constant analysis of one's own actions and undertaking remedial measures, such officers are able to plan their own activity and in the event of any hazards, they are able to change their defensive tactics efficiently<sup>57</sup>. Proactive people demonstrate a tendency to the conscious taking of a risk in any situation and they do not stop at the stage of a certain action plan. In the conditions of performing a difficult and dangerous profession of a prison system officer, they may react creatively to changes in the surroundings and extend their own competences efficiently<sup>58</sup>. These are very valuable behaviours, determining job safety and effectiveness. It is common knowledge that employees are more involved into and more attached to an organisation, they work more effectively, also in adverse conditions and they fulfil their duties better, what is reflected in the better functioning of the organisation and the creation of a good atmosphere at work, setting a good example to other employees. Job conditions (e.g. day/night shift) will also affect the sense of well-being, as well as the difficulty of employees' tasks, negative events or bad work conditions<sup>59</sup>. Shift work generates a nuisance in tasks crafting; nevertheless, the possibility of their autonomous selection and fulfilment in hazardous work, which is the Prison Service, provides a sense of being in control at work and in life, higher well-being and willingness to take new initiatives.

Another task of superiors seems to be putting more pressure on gaining employees able to create their own work. It has been underlined repeatedly in this article that employees with job crafting abilities may have a considerable share in the process of change implementation or restructuration in an organisation as people enabling a group to fulfil tasks more effectively and they introduce new work standards, and by means of their positive approach towards introducing new solutions, they will model the attitude of other employees and weaken the resistance to changes (the role of a job crafting facilitator). A prerequisite for continuing the positive changes in the prison system may include a change in the selection of staff, i.e. changing the recruitment system and selection

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<sup>57</sup> B. Kwiatkowski, op. cit.

<sup>58</sup> A. Bańka, *Proactivity – intentional construction of future and anticipatory achievement of personal goals by experiencing everyday life*, [in:] *Szkice o ludzkim poznawaniu i odczuwaniu*, ed. by H. Wrona-Polańska, W. Czerniawska, I. Wrona, Pedagogical University, Kraków 2009, pp. 11-23.

<sup>59</sup> B. Rożnowski, T. Korulczyk, *The well-being of shift workers*, "Czasopismo Psychologiczne" 2018, 24, 3, pp. 547-557.

to the service and training implemented in the service in order to attract employees characterised by proactive attitudes, the strong identification of their own values with the service values adapted to them, what would naturally increase the chances for job crafting and building a competitive advantage on the labour market. In such an understanding, job crafting through the redefinition of the contemporary human resources function may constitute a challenge for human resources management.

One ought to note here the factors determining a proactive attitude vs. non-proactive attitude, which include the personality traits of an employee and an approach of involvement determined by work conditions, needs and circumstances<sup>60</sup>. Job crafting with reference to both factors is aimed at accomplishing future targets with the active change of work environment conditions through the regulation of motivation and energy. The study results also shows that not all the officers, and not in each situation, apply job crafting. According to the said theory of requirements-resources in job crafting, it may be assumed that avoiding challenges may be a strategy of protection against the loss of small resources.

The research demonstrated that employees avoiding fulfilling their tasks are people less fitted to the service, not necessarily taking care of their professional development and with a low level of the sense of work meaning. People avoiding professional requirements select the hardest tasks in a particular manner, in order to consume as little energy as possible and only appear to be fulfilling tasks<sup>61</sup>. One may think that such people will not practise job crafting at all but it is not true. And the vigilance of superiors and the activities as part of proactive behaviour training seems to be purposeful for building motivation among such employees. Therefore, it is worth verifying in the subsequent research how it looks like in the Prison Service.

As far as work in the prison system is concerned, it may be observed that in a situation when other employees have conditions needed for more autonomous and creative work, and only some of them work creatively, it may generate stress because those working autonomously compare themselves to the rest of the group or superiors. In consequence, such a situation may have an adverse impact on the moods among employees

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<sup>60</sup> B. Kwiatkowski, op. cit.

<sup>61</sup> E. Demerouti, A.B. Bakker, J.R.B. Halbesleben, op. cit.

and interpersonal relationships at work, and usually people want to be satisfied with their job and life. Such a phenomenon may constitute a limitation in applying job crafting.

It is worth noting that the subject of the above research on job crafting has been tackled for the first time in Poland with reference to the group of respondents in the uniformed services. Perhaps the fact that the Prison Service organisation is quite hermetic, the researched group, although moderately numerous, enabled considerably high reliability and accuracy measurement. It may be also stated that the researched group is characteristic for personal safety hazard and work in hard conditions but it is different as regards shift work, the scope of duties in the respective divisions of the service and an autonomy degree in taking decisions, determined by a given position, what generates a need for continuing the search for work mechanisms in this formation.

In the future, it is also worth extending the research on job crafting, comprising a larger group of the representatives of other uniformed services (e.g. police, army) on account of the insufficient knowledge of this subject. Nevertheless, a suggestion of applying job crafting training has a chance to influence the decisions taken by officers concerning extending the time they spend on active duty or encourage a proactive employee to an activity aimed at work continuance after becoming retired<sup>62</sup>.

As it has been mentioned, proactive behaviour is basically determined by personal and situational correlates, and intensified through the susceptibility to prison environment factors; hence, it is recommended to measure the involvement and motivation of officers to apply job crafting and undertake required intentional behaviours in difficult situations, what entails exploration within stress control, burnout, involvement, work satisfaction and service.

It is also necessary to mention the limitations within the research conducted. A drawback of the research plan is a narrow selection of respondents. They all were selected from the same region of the Prison Service. In the future research, it is worth extending the research with other regions, because a broader representation of respective employment and organisational division categories will allow for more detailed mapping in the researched group concerning a tendency from the entire

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<sup>62</sup> P.W. Lichtenthaler, A. Fischbach, *Job crafting and motivation to continue working beyond retirement age*. "Career Development International" 2016, 21(5), pp. 477-497.

population. We took into account only two significant clarification variables. Although the percentage value of the variance clarified is high, capturing a higher number of variables would allow for devising a richer picture of the conditions of vocational well-being among the Polish prison system officers.



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