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Career-Oriented Versus Team-Oriented Commitment and Behavior at Work

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Among a representative sample of the Dutch population (Study 1: $N = 690$), career-oriented and team-oriented commitment were assessed, in addition to affective organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Confirmatory factor analysis supported the proposed distinction between the 2 specific forms of commitment at the measurement level. Furthermore, the construct validity of team-oriented and career-oriented commitment as well as their differential implications were corroborated by self-reports of work-related behavior 1 year later. The distinction between career-oriented and team-oriented commitment was then cross-validated in a 2nd study, among employees of a financial service organization in Belgium ($N = 287$), in which the constructs proved to be not only differentially related to self-reported behavior at work, but also predictive of performance ratings by superiors.

The aim of the present study was to develop and validate a measure to distinguish career-oriented from team-oriented work commitment. We intended to examine whether these specific forms of commitment could be distinguished from each other at the measurement level and to investigate whether they were differentially related to self-reported as well as externally assessed indexes of work-related behavior. We first present results from a representative sample of the Dutch working population, relating measures of commitment taken at Time 1 to self-reported behavior at Time 2 (Study 1). Subsequently, we cross-validated and extended our findings by examining whether similar results would be obtained when self-reported commitment scores were related to external assessments of performance, with an independent sample consisting of employees of a financial service organization in Belgium (Study 2).

In organizational theory and research, attempts to predict the behavior of individual workers in organizations have focused on organizational commitment as a crucial

psychological factor. From their review of studies on organizational commitment, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have concluded that *affective involvement* is most relevant as a behavioral predictor. This term refers to an attitudinal construct rather than a calculative investment in the organization in response to the extent to which the organization invests in its employees. Although various conceptualizations have been used to measure organizational commitment (cf. Morrow, 1983; Morrow, Eastman, & McElroy, 1991; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), the instrument developed by Allen and Meyer (1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991) has been frequently used in recent research. Of the three components they distinguish, *affective organizational commitment*, that is, the extent to which people experience a sense of identification and involvement with an organization, appears to be most closely related to various work aspects (cf. Allen & Meyer, 1996).

A second point that emerged from Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis was that focused commitment measures might be better suited to predict behavior than broad measures. The results of various individual studies seem to point to the conclusion that particular forms of commitment may be related to specific behaviors at work (cf. Randall, Fedor, & Longenecker, 1990). Accordingly, in a theoretical analysis, Reichers (1985) has pointed out that although the concept of *commitment* refers to acceptance of the goals and values of an organization, it is important to bear in mind that organizations usually encompass many different constituencies that may have conflicting goals. To the extent that degree of commitment is defined as a willingness to dedicate oneself to particular values and goals, it seems essential to specify the nature of these

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values and goals in order to predict people's behavior at work (see also Reichers, 1986). Although previous investigations (which we review in some detail below) have underlined the usefulness of investigating the effects of specific rather than broad commitment measures, in line with Reichers's theoretical analysis, such research efforts (see Becker, 1992; Becker & Billings, 1993; Hunt & Morgan, 1994) have mainly tried to assess the extent to which people feel committed to different organizational constituencies. Our approach in the present contribution, however, was slightly different, in that we aimed to explore the nature and possible consequences of commitment to individualistic versus prosocial work goals.

In trying to determine what makes people exert themselves at work, or how they choose to devote their energies, we argue, a distinction should be made between personal career goals (see Noe, 1996) and common team goals. This distinction seems particularly relevant in view of the recent concern with so-called *contextual* performance aspects. This term is used to refer to prosocial organizational behavior, that is, the extent to which workers are available, take initiative, or are prepared to help their coworkers in order to foster the achievement of common goals (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Organ, 1988; Schnake, 1991). Although personal task-related and contextual activities appear to occur relatively independently of each other, in the sense that objective measures of individual performance have proved to be uncorrelated with indexes of contextual performance (George & Bettenhausen, 1990), managers consider both kinds of efforts essential for organizational success (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1991).

Thus, in addition to the desire to perform well in one's own task, which may serve the goal of personal advancement, we argue, the willingness to help others to achieve common goals is a relevant work value (see also Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Ahearne, 1997). Therefore, in the present investigation we examined the extent to which people felt committed to the individual goal of advancing in their personal careers (*career-oriented commitment*) in addition to their commitment to common team goals (*team-oriented commitment*) as independent predictors of their inclination to focus on individual task performance and their propensity to be concerned with contextual performance aspects. Although the distinction between these two particular forms of commitment has not been investigated in the literature to date, we consider previous studies below that seem relevant to this issue in a broader sense.

The relationship between the inclination to display prosocial organizational behavior and the extent to which people feel committed to their group of coworkers has previously been addressed by Becker (1992). This study revealed that, along with general organizational commitment, more specific forms of commitment (i.e., to top

management, to one's supervisor, to one's work group) accounted for additional variance in job satisfaction, intention to quit, and prosocial organizational behavior. A secondary analysis of these data showed that those workers who were primarily committed to their local work group displayed the most prosocial organizational behavior (Becker & Billings, 1993), and from a further analysis of the same data set (Hunt & Morgan, 1994), it appears that the effects of work group commitment on organizational behavior occurred relatively independently of the level of organizational commitment. However, these conclusions with respect to work group commitment are all derived from a single data set (Becker, 1992) rather than independent observations in different organizations. Furthermore, it remains unclear what the measure of "work group commitment" used in that data set refers to exactly, because the measure has been used for different purposes in different studies (Becker, 1992; Becker & Billings, 1993; Hunt & Morgan, 1994).

In considering the extent to which previous research has examined the relation between commitment and career-oriented behavior, we first have to clarify some conceptual ambiguities. Although there is a fundamental difference between devotion to one's profession or occupation (Arnold, 1990; Blau, 1985, 1989) and the ambition to advance to a job at a higher level (see also Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1994; Aryee & Tan, 1992; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Noe, 1996), in the past, the term *career commitment* has been used in both contexts. To address this conceptual confusion, Meyer et al. (1993) have proposed use of the term *occupational commitment* to indicate the degree of commitment to a particular occupation or profession; this construct can be meaningfully distinguished from others such as job involvement (Blau, 1989) and organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 1993). Relevant to our present discussion is the finding that occupational commitment has turned out to be better suited to predicting particular behaviors than these more general work motives (see also Irving, Coleman, & Cooper, 1997). For instance, among a sample of teachers and nurses in Singapore (Aryee & Tan, 1992), those who were more committed to their profession indicated that they were more inclined to keep up with new developments in the profession and attend additional skills training. In the present investigation, we use the term *career-oriented commitment* exclusively to refer to people's motivations to work toward personal advancement in their professions.¹

For our present purposes, it seemed necessary to develop a measure that would specifically differentiate be-

¹ In the Dutch language, the term *career-oriented commitment* is less confusing, because the word for career (*carrière*) more unambiguously refers to personal advancement at work, rather than anything else.

tween team-oriented commitment on the one hand and career-oriented commitment on the other, while also being distinct from general organizational commitment. Therefore, we selected various items from existing commitment scales (e.g., Becker, 1992; Blau, 1985; Meyer & Allen, 1991; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986) and rephrased them to reflect a focus on personal advancement in one's career or on joint performance with one's team of coworkers, respectively. In a preliminary investigation (van den Heuvel, Ellemers, & Seghers, 1995), 32 such items were used to find out whether it was thus possible to distinguish between the different forms of commitment, as intended. Although in this preliminary study career-oriented and team-oriented commitment emerged as separate constructs that could be distinguished from affective organizational commitment, these results were not conclusive, because they pertained to a relatively small sample consisting of a specific group of workers, namely PhD students at a Dutch university. Furthermore, not all of the 32 original items turned out to be equally suitable for our purposes, and indeed a smaller set of items seemed preferable for a final scale that could be used in larger samples. The present investigation aimed to further develop and test suitable scales to measure career-oriented and team-oriented commitment.

Study 1

The main aim of this first study was to assess whether the distinction between career-oriented commitment and team-oriented commitment (in addition to organizational commitment) could be obtained by using confirmatory factor analysis (Hypothesis 1). The differential implications of these forms of commitment were further explored by examining the intercorrelations with relevant personal difference indexes (age, gender, level of education) as well as work-related variables (notably, hours worked per week, job tenure, size of work team, supervisory status, and general work satisfaction). Subsequently, we turned to the construct validity of career-oriented and team-oriented commitment. Specifically, we predicted that, in a worker faced with a dilemma, career-oriented commitment should be related to the intention to concentrate on his or her own work (Hypothesis 2), and team-oriented commitment should predict an inclination to help his or her colleagues (Hypothesis 3).

Additionally, we predicted, the different forms of commitment should be meaningfully related to specific indexes of self-reported behavior at work, namely absenteeism, working overtime, additional professional training, and turnover-related behavior. Career-oriented commitment should be related to a primary concern with personal development and advancement as evidenced in self-reported engagement in turnover-related behavior, that is,

participation in voluntary professional training (Hypothesis 4a; see Birdi, Allan, & Warr, 1997; Noe, 1996) as well as actual or attempted job change (Hypothesis 4b). To the extent that team-oriented commitment implies a sense of responsibility for collective outcomes, we predicted, it should include the motivation to help out colleagues, or at least avoid adding to their workload, which is likely to result in a desire to keep absenteeism to a minimum (Hypothesis 5a) and the willingness to work overtime (Hypothesis 5b). Although one might argue that high attendance and overtime work might also be the result of career-oriented commitment, it is important to consider that people commonly advance by moving to different organizations. Thus, career-oriented commitment does not necessarily imply that people are particularly motivated to exert themselves in their current jobs, and it may therefore turn out to have no effect on these behavioral self-reports (see also Noe, 1996).

Method

Procedure. The data for the first study were collected by a survey agency as part of an ongoing investigation in which a representative sample of Dutch citizens is monitored with respect to various issues. People are chosen to participate in the surveys by random sampling of telephone numbers, after which selection is made to match information provided by the Dutch Statistics Bureau (CBS). The resulting samples are representative of the general Dutch population in terms of age, gender, level of education, main activity and income, marital status and family size, political preference, and the region in the Netherlands as well as the size of the town in which respondents live. Participants in the survey are each provided with a home computer and network connection, on which they receive a different set of questions every week. The background variables of the respondents (gender, age, level of education, main activity) are updated bimonthly. The measures for the present investigation were taken in early January 1995 (Time 1) and at the end of December 1995 (Time 2).

Respondents. From the total sample comprising 2,000 households in the Netherlands, we selected people who were employed for at least 20 hours per week. Because we wanted to distinguish between commitment to the organization as a whole and commitment to one's team of immediate coworkers, we excluded people who reported that their team constituted the complete organization. This process resulted in a final sample of 690 people (495 men and 195 women), of whom 35% ($n = 244$) supervised other people in their jobs and 65% ($n = 446$) did not. The average number of hours per week for which these respondents were employed was 37. The mean age of the respondents in the final sample was 41 years.

Questionnaire. At the beginning of the survey, respondents were informed that they would be asked to complete a series of questions about the organization by which they were employed, as well as their team of coworkers. Then 18 work-related statements consecutively appeared on the computer screen; respondents indicated their agreement on a 7-point scale (1 = not

at all; 7 = very much). These statements were presented in random order; they comprised five items designed to measure general organizational commitment scale, seven items intended to measure team-oriented commitment, and six items intended to tap career-oriented commitment. The (affective) organizational commitment items were selected from a validated Dutch translation of the scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991; see de Gilder, van den Heuvel, & Ellemers, 1997). To assess team-oriented and career-oriented commitment, we selected subsets of items that had shown the highest factor loadings in a preliminary study (van den Heuvel et al., 1995). Subsequently, respondents were asked to indicate their general work satisfaction on a scale from 0 to 100 (0 = my feelings about work are very negative; 100 = my feelings about work are very positive)² and whether they would be inclined to help a colleague rather than pursuing their own personal interest in two dilemma scenarios.

Time 2. One year after the first measure, we questioned participants in the same ongoing survey. At Time 2, 413 of the respondents at Time 1 (307 men and 106 women) were still included as participants in the survey. Of the participants at Time 2, 38% ($n = 157$) supervised others in their jobs, and 62% ($n = 256$) did not. The average number of hours per week for which these respondents were employed was 37, and the mean age of the respondents at Time 2 was 42 years. In terms of these indexes, the respondents at Time 2 were comparable to those at Time 1; therefore, there is no reason to assume that the sample suffered from selective attrition.

At Time 2 we asked respondents to complete objective indexes of absenteeism, effort, and job change during the previous year, with the aim of validating differences in commitment at Time 1 by investigating whether they were differentially related to work behavior reported at Time 2. To measure absenteeism, we asked respondents whether they had been absent from work during the past year and to indicate the total duration of their absences. Additionally, we asked respondents whether they had worked overtime during the past year. Finally, respondents were asked to report their training and turnover by indicating whether during the past year they had voluntarily participated in additional professional training, made a voluntary job change, or searched for a different job.

Results

Three forms of commitment. To investigate the three forms of commitment, we performed confirmatory factor analysis with the LISREL program (Jöreskog & Sorböm, 1993), allowing the factors to be correlated. First, we tested whether we could distinguish between team-oriented and career-oriented commitment. When the six items that were supposed to measure career-oriented commitment and the seven items for team-oriented commitment were included in a two-factorial solution, they displayed a reasonable fit ($\phi = 0.38$; root mean-square residual, or $rmr = 0.049$, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index, or $AGFI = 0.92$). However, one item from the career-oriented scale and two items from the team-oriented scale (see Table 1) had quite high modification indices. After these items were excluded, the resulting solution im-

proved substantially ($rmr = 0.039$, $AGFI = 0.96$). Subsequently, we added the organizational commitment items to fit the three-factorial structure and to check whether the two other scales could be distinguished from general organizational commitment. In the initial solution, one organizational commitment item had an unacceptably low factor loading ($< .30$). After exclusion of this item, the final solution was obtained (see Table 1), with a good fit of the 14 remaining items on the intended three factors ($rmr = 0.048$, $AGFI = 0.93$). The final scales consisted of four items for organizational commitment ($\alpha = 0.79$), five items for team-oriented commitment ($\alpha = 0.72$), and five items for career-oriented commitment ($\alpha = 0.88$). As predicted, career-oriented commitment was relatively independent of team-oriented commitment ($r = 0.29$), as well as organizational commitment ($r = 0.38$). There was a substantial correlation between the scales for team-oriented commitment and organizational commitment ($r = 0.61$). Nevertheless, the fit of the three-factor model was significantly better, $\chi^2(74, N = 600) = 245.9, p < .01$ than that of the two-factor model, $\chi^2(76, N = 600) = 355.2, p < .01$.

Interrelations with personal differences and work-related variables. To further explore the differences between the three forms of commitment, each was correlated with respondents' age, gender, job tenure, number of hours worked per week, level of education, supervisory duty, and team size, because organizational commitment has been found to covary with these variables (see Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Additionally, we explored how each form of commitment was related to people's general work satisfaction (see Table 2).

None of the three forms of commitment were clearly related to gender, level of education, or team size; these findings are in line with data on organizational commitment (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). As is consistent with findings in previous studies (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), organizational commitment was stronger as respondents were older, had more job tenure, or worked in a supervisory role. Furthermore, the more hours per week respondents were employed, the stronger their sense of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment was also positively related to general work satisfaction. However, for the other two forms of commitment, a different pattern emerged. Although career-oriented commitment was also positively related to the number of hours worked per week,

² A recent meta-analysis has revealed that single items are highly correlated with scale measures of overall job satisfaction (Wanous et al., 1997). Consequently, Wanous et al., have argued that when cost considerations in large-scale surveys limit the number of questions that may be asked, as was the case in the present investigation, single-item measures of overall job satisfaction are acceptable.

Table 1
Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Organizational Commitment, Team-Oriented Commitment, and Career-Oriented Commitment

Items	Factor loadings					
	Study 1			Study 2		
	F1	F2	F3	F1	F2	F3
Career-oriented commitment						
1. My career is one of the most important things in my life.	.82			.82		
2. I regularly consider what I could do to get ahead at work.	.60			.69		
3. The ambitions in my life mainly have to do with my career.	.89			.88		
4. My career plays a central role in my life.	.83			.86		
5. I think that I should have a successful career.	.72			.61		
6. I am prepared to do additional chores, when this benefits my career. ^a						
Team-oriented commitment						
1. I am prepared to do additional chores, when this benefits my team.		.72			.54	
2. I feel at home among my colleagues at work.		.65			.47	
3. I try to invest effort into a good atmosphere in my team.		.61			.50	
4. In my work, I let myself be guided by the goals of my team.		.56			.54	
5. When there is social activity with my team, I usually help to organize it.		.44			.46	
6. This team lies close to my heart. ^a						
7. I find it important that my team is successful. ^a						
Organizational commitment						
1. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.			.76			.76
2. I feel emotionally attached to this organization.			.76			.73
3. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.			.54			.50
4. I feel 'part of the family' in this organization.			.74			.68
5. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this organization. ^a						

^a Items excluded from final solution.

supervisory roles, and general work satisfaction—although less strongly so, $t(687) = 9.40, p < .001$ —the relationships with age and job tenure were opposite to those found for organizational commitment, $t(687) = 7.00, p < .001$, and $t(687) = 4.8, p < .001$, respectively. In other words, people in the present study showed stronger career-oriented commitment the younger they were and the less experience they had in their present jobs. Team-oriented commitment was not related to any of the usual background variables, with the exception of working in a supervisory role. It was, however, strongly related to work satisfaction.

Construct validation. At Time 1 we tried to validate the conceptual implications of team-oriented versus career-oriented commitment by asking respondents to indicate whether they would rather help a colleague or pursue their own personal self-interest in two hypothetical dilemma situations. In the first scenario, respondents had to choose between helping a colleague (2) and completing their own work (1). The second scenario was designed to assess whether people were prepared to work overtime in order to help their hypothetical colleague (2), when to do so would be at the expense of some leisure activity for themselves (1). When the three forms of commitment were included as predictors in a logistic regression analysis (cf. Menard, 1995), only career-oriented commitment emerged as a significant predictor, $B = -0.39$, Wald $\chi^2(1,$

$N = 690) = 28.15, p < .001$, for the first scenario, indicating that with stronger feelings of career-oriented commitment, respondents were less likely to help their colleague at the expense of their own work. By contrast, for the second scenario only team-oriented commitment proved to be a significant predictor, $B = 0.46$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 690) = 15.02, p < .001$, indicating that the higher the level of team-oriented commitment, the more people were inclined to sacrifice their leisure time to help a colleague complete his or her work.

Self-reported behavior at Time 2. In a series of logistic regression analyses, we tested the hypothesized relations between the three forms of commitment and self-reported behavior a year later. Whether ($n = 215$) or not ($n = 198$) respondents had been absent from work during the past year was unrelated to their level of commitment Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) < 1, ns$. The duration of their absences could also not be predicted from the three forms of commitment, $R^2 = .02, F(3, 211) = 1.33, ns$. When we distinguished between those who had not worked overtime during the past year ($n = 129$) and those who had ($n = 284$), team-oriented commitment emerged as the only significant predictor, $B = 0.65$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) = 14.98, p < .001$; as hypothesized, respondents were more likely to indicate that they had worked overtime as they reported more team-oriented commitment. Furthermore, in line with our predictions, only career-oriented commit-

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of All Variables Measured in Study 1

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Organizational commitment (1-7)	4.53	1.22	—			
2. Career-oriented commitment (1-7)	3.75	1.21	.38**	—		
3. Team-oriented commitment (1-7)	5.27	0.88	.61**	.29**	—	
4. Age of respondent (years)	41.27	9.36	.24**	-.11*	.09	—
5. Job tenure (years)	10.42	8.18	.12*	-.12*	.01	.54**
6. Level of education (9 categories)	5.66	1.91	-.02	-.06	.06	-.07
7. Gender (1 = male; 2 = female)	1.28	.45	-.08	-.08	.10	-.16**
8. Hours per week (hours)	36.91	5.73	.10*	.18**	.01	-.02
9. Size of team (4 categories)	2.15	1.08	-.04	.01	.00	-.08
10. Work satisfaction (0-100)	73.97	16.30	.56**	.16**	.55**	.09
11. Supervising others (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.35	.48	.20**	.12*	.25**	.21**
12. Scenario 1 (1 = own work; 2 = help colleague)	1.53	.50	.03	-.18**	.05	-.10*
13. Scenario 2 (1 = leisure self; 2 = help colleague)	1.62	.49	.20**	.05	.24**	-.13**
14. Absenteeism (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.52	.50	-.07	-.01	-.06	.08
15. Duration absenteeism (6 categories)	2.53	1.86	-.02	.11	.05	.05
16. Overtime (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.69	.46	.10	.11	.22**	.07
17. Voluntary training (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.15	.35	.06	.12	.04	.08
18. Voluntary job change (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.11	.32	.03	.18**	.05	.24**
19. Job applications (1 = no; 2 = yes)	1.10	.30	-.15*	.10	-.11	.21**

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

ment proved to be a significant predictor of whether people had ($n = 60$) or had not ($n = 353$) taken the initiative to participate in additional professional training, $B = 0.28$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) = 4.65$, $p < .05$. In a similar vein, when we distinguished respondents who had made a voluntary job change during the previous year ($n = 47$) from the others ($n = 366$), only career-oriented commitment emerged as a predictor, $B = 0.56$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) = 13.26$, $p < .001$; respondents who felt more strongly committed to their careers were more likely to have made a voluntary job change than those with lower levels of career-oriented commitment. Finally, when we distinguished respondents who had applied for a job during the past year ($n = 40$) from those who had not made any job applications ($n = 373$), organizational commitment, $B = 0.59$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) = 10.10$, $p < .01$, and career-oriented commitment, $B = -0.61$, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 413) = 12.54$, $p < .001$, emerged as significant predictors. Respondents who had applied for a different job reported less organizational commitment but were more committed to their careers than those who indicated that they had not made any job applications.

Discussion

The results of the measures taken at Time 1 generally corroborate our predictions. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis support our first hypothesis: that the scales we developed measure two different forms of commitment that can be distinguished from general organizational commitment. Furthermore, it seems that a limited number of items are sufficient to assess commitment to

these different work goals; this factor enhances the practicability of these measures for large-scale surveys (see also Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997).

The significance of the distinction between these forms of commitment is underlined by their differential patterns of correlations with important background variables. As was found in previous investigations (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), organizational commitment is stronger among respondents with longer job tenure and greater work satisfaction. Furthermore, people feel more committed to the organization when they are employed for a greater number of hours per week. In contrast, whereas career-oriented commitment is stronger for respondents who report greater job satisfaction and are employed for more hours per week, it is negatively related to age and job tenure. Like organizational commitment, team-oriented commitment is strongly related to work satisfaction. Nevertheless, the distinction between the two is supported by the finding that team-oriented commitment proves unrelated to other work-related variables that covary with organizational commitment.

The conceptual implications of team-oriented versus career-oriented commitment as predictors of specific behavioral intentions are illustrated by the additional measures taken at Time 1 and Time 2. In line with our second hypothesis, career-oriented commitment implies a greater self-proclaimed inclination to decline helping a colleague at the expense of one's own work. By contrast, a strong sense of commitment to one's team covaries with a relative preparedness to work overtime in order to help co-workers complete their work; this finding corroborates

5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
—														
-.20**	—													
-.16**	.06													
.08	.01	-.50**												
.01	.02	-.08	.10											
.02	.06	.05	-.00	.00										
-.03	.06	-.12*	.14**	-.01	.08									
.08	-.06	.05	-.08	.00	.04	-.01								
.01	.04	.11*	.04	-.02	.11*	-.07	.06							
-.03	.02	.07	-.05	.09	-.08	-.11	.04	.01						
.07	-.14	.14	-.02	-.05	-.14	.10	-.06	-.10						
-.10	.06	-.06	.08	.00	.13	.20**	-.08	.02	-.02	-.12				
-.11	.05	-.05	.03	.08	.02	-.02	.06	-.03	-.03	-.01	.12			
-.18**	-.01	.04	.05	.09	.02	.04	.01	-.03	.01	-.07	.11	.09		
-.18**	.12	-.03	.03	.01	-.17**	-.06	.01	-.06	.04	.02	.02	.13*	.19**	

Hypothesis 3. The absence of an effect of team-oriented commitment on the first behavioral dilemma indicates that team-oriented commitment does not result in a greater readiness to help a colleague at the expense of one's own work; this finding highlights positive rather than possibly negative consequences of this form of commitment.

Although not all the predicted effects were obtained, the various behavioral measures taken at Time 2 show that career-oriented and team-oriented commitment are meaningfully related to self-reported behavior at a later point in time. Indeed, as more generally seems to be the case with respect to different foci of commitment (see Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) the two specific forms of commitment prove to be more clearly related to specific work-related behaviors than is general organizational commitment. In accordance with our predictions (Hypotheses 4a and 4b), the regression analyses show that self-reported job changes, as well as initiatives aimed at achieving job changes, are consistently associated with level of career-oriented commitment. Conversely, people's preparedness to work overtime is related to the extent they feel committed to their team of coworkers, as suggested by Hypothesis 5a. The results do not support the prediction that absenteeism should be lower among workers reporting more team-oriented commitment (Hypothesis 5b). This finding possibly has to do with the fact that our measure included involuntary as well as voluntary absenteeism. It is unclear to what extent people have volitional control over this variable.

Taken together, the results of Study 1 corroborate the theoretical distinction between the different forms of or-

ganizational commitment at the measurement level with respect to the ways in which they covary with different background variables and in terms of their construct validity. However, even though we included measures taken at different points in time, this study relied entirely on self-reports of commitment as well as of work-related behavior. Furthermore, given the broad sample of workers who participated in this study, we had no information about their actual work situations, nor about the relative importance of team versus career considerations in their specific jobs. In a second study, we therefore aimed to corroborate and extend these findings by focusing on workers within a single organization, which enabled us to keep possibly confounding job and organizational characteristics constant, and to include respondents' performance ratings from supervisors in addition to self-report measures.

Study 2

For our second study we selected a specific group of workers in an organization where both team and career considerations would play important roles. In many cases, as Study 1 demonstrates, team-oriented commitment implies a focus on one's current job (i.e., in the present work environment), whereas career-oriented commitment refers to the concern with one's future job (i.e., in a different organization). To investigate more closely the implications of team-oriented versus career-oriented commitment for behavior and performance in a particular job, it is important to note that both team and career considerations may affect people's behavior in the same work situa-

tion, as is the case when people hope to advance their careers by advancing to higher job levels within the same organization. They may then be motivated to perform well in their current jobs for the sake of a good team performance, for personal benefit, or both.

Although both of these considerations may cause people to put additional effort into their work, they essentially refer to different goals; the nature of their work efforts is therefore likely to vary. A strong sense of career-oriented commitment should lead people to be primarily concerned with their own task activities, whereas a concern with more contextual and collaborative work activities is likely to be related to the extent to which they feel committed to their teams. The question then remains how these different kinds of work effort translate into people's actual performance. Indeed, this question is all the more important given that each of these two kinds of effort may have negative as well as positive consequences: Investing in future opportunities to make a career may result in a less than optimal performance in one's current job, whereas a focus on contextual performance aspects and helping behavior may be to the detriment of one's personal task performance. It is important to assess how the two types of commitment in fact emerge in different aspects of work performance, as well as how they affect overall performance.

We selected a financial service organization in Belgium to continue our investigation. This organization is sufficiently large (3500–4000 employees in total) for people to commonly pursue advancement to higher job levels within it. Indeed, management policy actively tries to prevent employees from leaving the organization (e.g., by offering day care for the children of their employees, by providing various forms of financial support), and it encourages them to pursue personal advancement within the organization. Also, by means of a refined system of salary scales, employees at the same job level are differentially rewarded according to individual performance. Additional career opportunities are offered to employees on the basis of performance ratings by their superiors as well. Although these measures illustrate that personal career development is encouraged in a variety of ways, workers in this organization are at the same time jointly responsible for the successful completion of their tasks. To provide good service to the organization's customers, employees are expected to work together as teams. Thus, both career-oriented and team-oriented commitment are relevant for employees of this organization; in their current jobs they are expected to demonstrate both individual abilities and successful collaboration with their colleagues.

Within the organization, we focused on a particular group of workers for whom career versus team considerations would be most relevant: those currently employed at the highest clerical level, from which they can be se-

lected for a management-trainee trajectory on the basis of evaluations of their specialist knowledge and work attitudes. Thus, even while such workers have to work together as a team, advancing to a higher level within the organization constitutes a relevant and realistic option for them. All participants in the second study had full-time employment at this type of job in this organization. This invariance enabled us to rule out differences in work conditions as an alternative explanation for differential effects of commitment, as we were unable to do in Study 1. Furthermore, in Study 2 we did not rely only on self-reports of behavior; we were also able to relate people's commitment scores to their superiors' evaluations of their performance.

With respect to self-reported behavior, in line with the results of Study 1, we predicted that the activities employees would undertake to achieve a job change should be related to their level of career-oriented commitment, rather than team-oriented commitment (Hypothesis 1). As for performance at work, in principle it might be related to career-oriented commitment as well as team-oriented commitment, as we have argued above, but the nature of the work effort seemed likely to differ. Given that superiors would be evaluating work performance on a number of different dimensions, we hypothesized that career-oriented commitment would predict how people were rated on task- and ability-related dimensions (Hypothesis 2), whereas team-oriented commitment would be related to more contextual aspects of performance, such as interpersonal skills and ways of collaborating with their coworkers (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Procedure. The questionnaires for the second study were distributed among all workers at the job level we selected in a large financial service organization in Belgium ($N = 615$). Because they worked in both the French-speaking and the Dutch-speaking parts of Belgium, the original (Dutch-language) questionnaires were first translated into French by the internal translation department of the organization and then back-translated into Dutch by the researchers. Prospective respondents received the questionnaire at work, with an accompanying letter from the director of human resource management emphasizing the importance of the study as well as a letter from us explaining that the study was conducted for scientific purposes and that all answers would remain anonymous. Completed questionnaires could be returned through the internal mail service, which collected them and turned them over to us.

Respondents. The group of people who completed the questionnaire comprised 287 workers (213 out of 459 men and 73 out of 156 women), resulting in an overall response rate of 47%. The age of respondents ranged from 27 to 60 years, with a mean of 41. These respondents were representative of the total sample both in terms of distribution across age groups and representation of different levels of education.

Questionnaire. To measure the different forms of commitment, we instructed respondents to indicate their agreement with a series of statements, in the same way as in the first study. To measure turnover-related behavior, we asked them to indicate whether they would like to have a different job within the same organization (1 = *yes*; 2 = *no*) and whether they would like to move to a different organization (1 = *yes*; 2 = *no*). Furthermore, respondents were asked to report whether they had actually applied for a different job within the organization during the past year (1 = *yes*; 2 = *no*) and if so how many times they had made an internal job application. In a similar vein, they were asked to indicate whether they had applied for a job in a different organization during the past year (1 = *yes*; 2 = *no*). Finally, respondents were asked to provide information about personal background variables, notably gender, age, level of education, and job tenure.

Information about the actual work performance of respondents was collected from a different source: performance ratings that were made by their work supervisors. These evaluations comprised 18 specific rating scales, as well as an overall evaluation. We used the ratings that were registered as a matter of course in annual work evaluations, rather than asking supervisors to complete a separate measure for the study. The drawback of this approach is that the performance ratings were not specifically geared toward assessing the extent to which people displayed team-oriented versus career-oriented efforts at work. Nevertheless, they reflected the performance aspects considered relevant in the organization and consequential for the workers in question, in the sense that decisions about additional rewards or job opportunities were made on the basis of these evaluations.

Results

Cross-validation of the three forms of commitment. To cross-validate the distinction between the three forms of commitment, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (Jöreskog & Sorböm, 1993). A three-factorial structure showed an acceptable fit of the 14 items that were retained for the second study on the three intended factors ($rmr = 0.059$, $AGFI = 0.89$; see Table 1). As an additional check, we also fitted a two-factorial model on the 10 items that intended to measure team-oriented and career-oriented commitment only, which confirmed that these 10 items referred to two different forms of commitment ($\phi = 0.47$, $rmr = 0.051$, $AGFI = 0.92$). The internal consistencies of the three resulting scales were similar to those obtained with the first sample. The reliability of the five items for team-oriented commitment again was slightly lower ($\alpha = 0.60$) than that of the four items that assessed organizational commitment ($\alpha = 0.76$), and the five items that measured career-oriented commitment ($\alpha = 0.88$). The correlations between career-oriented commitment and team-oriented commitment ($r = 0.37$), as well as organizational commitment ($r = 0.37$), were similar to those we obtained in the first study. Although team-oriented commitment again covaried with organizational commitment ($r = 0.57$), in this sample the fit of the three-factor

model was significantly better, $\chi^2(74, N = 286) = 167.7$, $p < .01$, than that of the two-factor model, $\chi^2(76, N = 286) = 178.9$, $p < .01$. Other correlations between the three forms of commitment and different personal background variables (age, job tenure, level of education, gender) were also similar to the results of the first study (see Table 3).

Turnover-related behavior. In a series of (logistic) regression analyses, we examined the extent to which each self-reported behavior could be predicted from the three forms of commitment. For each of the indexes we first included individual difference variables in the regression before testing whether the three forms of commitment further contributed to the prediction of respondents' self-reported behavior. Except when noted otherwise, the background variables (age, gender, level of education, and job tenure) did not emerge as significant predictors.

To assess which respondents would be most inclined to turnover, we first asked whether they would like to do work elsewhere. Respondents were then asked to report on their turnover-related behaviors during the past year by indicating whether they had applied for a job in a different organization in that period. Whether people wanted to work elsewhere ($n = 24$) or not ($n = 248$) depended only on their level of organizational commitment, $B = -1.44$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 272) = 20.56$, $p < .0001$. The more they felt committed to the organization, the less they expressed the desire to leave. At the same time, reports of their actual behavior, namely whether they had ($n = 7$) or had not ($n = 274$) applied for a job elsewhere, were predicted not only by the extent to which they felt committed to the organization, $B = -1.02$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 281) = 4.42$, $p < .05$, but also by their career-oriented commitment, $B = 1.18$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 281) = 5.73$, $p < .025$. Thus, respondents who indicated that they had applied for a job elsewhere showed low organizational commitment but were relatively strongly committed to their own careers.

Internal turnover-related behavior revealed a similar pattern, with only organizational commitment, $B = -.52$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 264) = 9.19$, $p < .01$, emerging as a significant predictor of whether respondents would ($n = 91$) or would not ($n = 173$) like to have a different job within the organization. However, whether respondents indicated they indeed had ($n = 85$) or had not ($n = 197$) actually applied for such a job did not depend on their level of organizational commitment. Instead, respondents' age, $B = -.05$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 282) = 4.47$, $p < .05$, and job tenure, $B = -.08$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 282) = 7.00$, $p < .01$, emerged as significant predictors, together with level of career-oriented commitment, $B = .25$, $\text{Wald } \chi^2(1, N = 282) = 4.57$, $p < .05$. Respondents were more likely to indicate that they had applied for a different job when they were more strongly committed to their careers (as

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of All Variables Measured in Study 2

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Organizational commitment (1–7)	5.29	1.08	—			
2. Career-oriented commitment (1–7)	3.85	1.39	.37**	—		
3. Team-oriented commitment (1–7)	5.36	0.89	.57**	.37**	—	
4. Age of respondent (years)	40.97	6.48	.07	-.17**	.08	—
5. Job tenure (years)	6.63	6.13	.06	-.06	.02	.39**
6. Level of education (3 categories)	2.61	0.91	-.11	.13*	.09	-.26**
7. Gender (1 = male; 2 = female)	1.26	0.44	-.01	-.06	-.00	-.22**
8. Want to work elsewhere (1 = yes; 2 = no)	1.91	0.28	.37**	.08	.17**	.03
9. Applied for job elsewhere (1 = yes; 2 = no)	1.98	0.16	.17**	-.07	.16**	.08
10. Aspire to different job (1 = yes; 2 = no)	1.66	0.47	.28**	-.03	.22**	.17**
11. Applied for job internally (1 = yes; 2 = no)	1.70	0.46	.04	-.18**	-.02	.23**
12. Number of internal job applications	0.89	1.21	-.04	.20*	-.03	-.22**
13. Task-related abilities (1–4)	2.29	0.30	.12	-.01	.09	.16
14. General abilities (1–4)	2.63	0.35	.11	.04	.09	.07
15. Contextual qualities (1–4)	2.51	0.35	.19**	.10	.26**	.01
16. Relational qualities (1–4)	2.58	0.39	.19**	.01	.14*	.16*
17. Overall performance	2.49	0.50	.12	.12	.18**	.01

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

was the case with external turnover), when they were younger, and when they had less job tenure.

Finally, for the number of internal job applications made during the past year, we obtained a significant regression equation, $R^2 = .08$, $F(4, 140) = 2.93$, $p < .025$, as a result of the inclusion of the individual difference variables. At this first step, age was the only significant predictor ($\beta = -.24$, $t = 2.54$, $p < .025$), indicating that the reported number of external job applications was lower as respondents were older. Addition of the three forms of commitment at Step 2 again resulted in a significant regression equation, $R^2 = .12$, $F(7, 137) = 2.64$, $p < .025$, with career-oriented commitment emerging as the only significant predictor ($\beta = .21$, $t = 2.32$, $p < .025$) other than age ($\beta = -.19$, $t = 2.05$, $p < .05$). In line with the other turnover-related measures, a higher level of career-oriented commitment implied a higher number of reported internal job applications.

Performance ratings. The 18 scales on which the performance of respondents had been rated by their supervisors were first subjected to principal components analysis. This process resulted in a four-factorial solution, which accounted for 50% of the variance in the ratings on the separate rating scales. Two factors described different task-related performance aspects, while two factors referred to the way people performed among their coworkers. Accordingly, we calculated unweighted mean scores for ratings in terms of task performance (e.g., occupational knowledge, quality of work; $\alpha = 0.60$), general performance (e.g., oral expression, written expression; $\alpha = 0.73$), contextual performance (e.g., initiative, enthusiasm; $\alpha = 0.71$), and relational performance (e.g., quality of relations with coworkers or supervisor; $\alpha = 0.69$). Each of these four performance dimensions was related

to the overall performance evaluation, with correlations ranging between .40 and .60 (see Table 3). Stepwise regression analyses were conducted to investigate how these different performance dimensions as well as overall performance were related to the background variables (age, gender, level of education, and job tenure at Step 1) and whether the three forms of commitment further contributed to the prediction of each of these performance indexes (at Step 2).

Contrary to our expectations, task performance was not reliably related to any of the background variables included at Step 1, $R^2 = .02$, $F(4, 208) < 1$, *ns*, nor to the three forms of commitment, $R^2 = .03$, $F(7, 205) < 1$, *ns*. For the general performance ratings, we also obtained nonsignificant regression equations at Step 1, $R^2 = .01$, $F(4, 210) < 1$, *ns*, as well as Step 2, $R^2 = .03$, $F(7, 207) < 1$, *ns*.

Contextual performance, which was not reliably related to any of the background variables at Step 1, $R^2 = .02$, $F(4, 211) = 1.33$, *ns*, yielded a significant regression equation after the introduction of the three commitment variables at Step 2, $R^2 = .09$, $F(7, 208) = 3.05$, $p < .01$, with the level of team-oriented commitment emerging as the only significant predictor ($\beta = .24$, $t = 2.82$, $p < .01$). In line with our prediction in Hypothesis 3, this finding indicated that respondents were more likely to show a favorable contextual performance when they were more committed to their team of coworkers. For relational performance, we obtained a marginally significant regression equation at Step 1, $R^2 = .04$, $F(4, 226) = 2.32$, $p < .06$, which became significant after the inclusion of the three forms of commitment at Step 2, $R^2 = .07$, $F(7, 223) = 2.49$, $p < .025$. Organizational commitment ($\beta = .16$, $t = 1.95$, $p < .06$) emerged as the only predictor

5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
—												
-.10	—											
-.05	.13*	—										
.04	-.05	.04	—									
.03	.03	.04	.36**	—								
.16*	-.14	-.02	.28**	.08	—							
.21**	-.09	.05	.09	.10	.44**	—						
-.16*	.02	-.04	-.16*	-.28**	-.39**	-.71**	—					
.05	-.03	-.04	.05	.07	.07	.06	-.17	—				
.03	-.03	-.08	.23**	.12	.23**	.10	-.08	.42**	—			
-.03	.07	-.09	.14*	.10	.19**	.08	-.19*	.37**	.50**	—		
.06	-.11	-.13*	.19**	.04	.21**	.14*	-.13	.37**	.40**	.38**	—	
.00	-.05	-.13*	.10	.11	.22**	.10	-.11	.44**	.58**	.59**	.39**	—

for this variable, indicating that ratings of respondents' relational performance were more favorable when they were more committed to the organization.

Finally, the overall performance ratings showed a non-significant regression equation at Step 1, $R^2 = .02$, $F(4, 240) = 1.16$, *ns*, with an improved prediction at Step 2, $R^2 = .05$, $F(7, 237) = 1.92$, $p < .07$. As was the case with contextual performance, team-oriented commitment emerged as the only significant predictor of overall performance ($\beta = .16$, $t = 2.02$, $p < .05$), indicating that participants' overall performance at work was rated more favorably by their supervisors when they were more committed to their coworkers.

Discussion

An important aim of this second study was to cross-validate the distinction between team-oriented and career-oriented commitment. In this sample, the confirmatory factor analysis supported the distinction between career-oriented and team-oriented commitment, and correlations with other variables were similar to those we obtained in the first study.

A further goal of this study was to gain more insight into the way in which the different forms of commitment can be used to predict work-related behavior. Given that this study was conducted among a specific group of workers in a single organization, the nature of the situation at work (type of organization, job level, number of hours worked per week, career opportunities, importance of team performance) was similar for all respondents and can therefore be ruled out as an alternative explanation for differences in work-related behavior. Furthermore, when testing whether commitment levels could predict various

behavioral indexes, we always corrected for the effects of personal background variables (gender, age, level of education, job tenure). It turns out that these individual differences do not systematically affect the different behavioral indexes (except that internal job applications are related to respondents' age and job tenure), whereas the forms of commitment consistently predict additional variance.

In regard to the different turnover indexes, there is an intriguing difference between people's aspirations on the one hand and reports of their actual behavior on the other. People who report strong organizational commitment are less inclined to indicate that they would like to work in a different organization or that they would prefer to have a different job than those who are less committed. This relation between organizational commitment and turnover preferences is in line with previous findings (cf. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). However, career-oriented commitment turns out to be an important predictor of actual (self-reported) turnover behavior, in addition to organizational commitment in the case of external job applications, and in addition to respondents' age and job tenure in the case of internal job applications; these findings corroborate Hypothesis 1.

With respect to employees' performance ratings by their superiors, we see a different pattern. Organizational commitment does not predict task performance or overall performance ratings, but only relational aspects of respondents' performance. This relation can be understood by considering that organizational commitment refers to a sense of emotional attachment to an organization, which arguably should also reflect some personal involvement with the people who work there. Consequently, in a gen-

eral sense, those who feel highly committed to an organization should be particularly disposed to maintain good interpersonal relations with their supervisors and coworkers. Possibly this relation is especially pronounced in the organization we investigated in this study, because this organization facilitates the development and maintenance of interpersonal relations between individual workers by providing the opportunity to participate in common social and cultural activities as a secondary work condition.

Career-oriented commitment does not emerge as a reliable predictor of people's performance at work. Contrary to our expectation in Hypothesis 2, even ratings on dimensions that refer to (general and specific) aspects of their personal task performance cannot be predicted from the extent to which workers feel committed to their careers. This finding converges with results from a recent investigation by Noe (1996), who could not establish a significant relation between employees' career management activities and their performance as rated by their supervisors. In a similar vein, Aryee and Tan (1992) found that professional commitment was unrelated to self-reported work quality. In the present investigation the lack of a relation between career-oriented commitment and individual performance is all the more interesting, given that in the organization under study ambitious workers are generally expected to advance to higher levels within the organization by showing superior performance in their current jobs. By contrast, team-oriented commitment does turn out to be related to performance at work, that is, to performance ratings in terms of contextual qualities (supporting Hypothesis 3) and overall performance evaluations. According to management policy in this organization, performance evaluations are used to allocate additional monetary rewards to specific individuals, as well as to decide who is eligible for further advancement. Thus, the present results seem to indicate that, at least in this particular organization, a strong sense of commitment to one's team of coworkers is most likely to result in the favorable performance evaluations that may yield additional career opportunities. However, whether people take advantage of these opportunities is likely to depend on the extent to which they feel committed to their careers.

General Discussion

The main purpose of our investigation was to examine implications of the distinction between team-oriented and career-oriented commitment, and to assess their value as behavioral predictors. The usefulness of the distinction between career-oriented and team-oriented commitment, in addition to their distinction from general organization commitment, is corroborated by the results of this investigation in different ways. First, the confirmatory factor analysis among a representative sample of the Dutch

working population supports the hypothesis that the three intended factors may be extracted from the commitment questionnaire. Second, this analysis is cross-validated by the results obtained from a specific group of respondents for whom both team and career considerations are relevant. Finally, the finding that team-oriented commitment is correlated with organizational commitment may seem problematic at first sight, but it makes perfect conceptual sense upon closer inspection. Indeed, the very nature of these concepts requires that they be interrelated, because they refer to overlapping entities, with one's team constituting part of the organization as a whole (see also Hunt & Morgan, 1994). Although we obtained modest scale reliabilities, it seems that the conceptual distinction between career-oriented and team-oriented commitment is both theoretically meaningful and practically useful.

Organizational commitment is a rather broad concept, which refers to the general preparedness to engage in long-term involvement with and to exert oneself on behalf of an organization. Although researchers seem to agree that organizational commitment may comprise different facets, aspects, or foci (see also Hom, Katerberg, & Hulin, 1979; Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Mowday et al., 1979; Tetrick & Farkas, 1988), this agreement has mainly resulted in debates as to which conceptual components should or should not be included in commitment measures (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Morrow, 1983; Morrow et al., 1991). At the same time, however, there has been converging evidence from different domains that specific intentions are more closely related to actual behavioral displays than are more general attitudes (e.g., Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; see also Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). We observed this phenomenon in our second study, where organizational commitment was related to turnover intentions, whereas career-oriented commitment predicted the actual occurrence of turnover-related behavior as reported by our respondents. Consequently, we argue that career-oriented and team-oriented commitment are better suited than general organizational commitment to predict the occurrence of particular behaviors at work. This is not to say that measures of organizational commitment cannot predict a variety of behavioral consequences, but it does imply that a more focused commitment measure may be preferable when a particular behavioral outcome is of interest.

The relevance of the distinction between team-oriented and career-oriented commitment is also supported by other results. The different forms of commitment showed differential patterns of correlations with personal differences and work-related variables in Study 1 and emerged as specific predictors of work-related behavior, along with performance evaluations, in Study 2. Although not all relations we observed were equally strong, they support our general argument that specific behavioral indicators

are related to different forms of commitment. People with high levels of career-oriented commitment are more likely than those who are less committed to their career to be oriented toward future advancement opportunities and to undertake behavior aimed at finding a different job. Pursuit of such individualistic work goals may not only cause employees to limit their input in their present job (so that their devotion to their career does not result in a superior task performance), but may also result in substantial organizational cost when they leave the organization (Cascio, 1991). Conversely, employees who feel strongly committed to their coworkers appear more inclined than those who show less team-oriented commitment to direct their efforts to achieving a good team performance, as is reflected in relatively high ratings on contextual performance aspects as well as enhanced overall performance evaluations. The relevance of this finding is underlined by the fact that in modern organizations, particularly in the rapidly growing service sector (Goldstein & Gilliam, 1990) people are commonly expected to work together in teams (Schaubroeck & Ganster, 1991), where the performance of the group depends on the willingness of individual employees to help each other (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997). Thus, although the adoption of both team-oriented and career-oriented goals may elicit increased work effort, the results of these two studies underline the possible downside of career-oriented commitment, while they highlight positive rather than negative effects of team-oriented commitment, to the organization.

Although we believe that our data justify drawing the above conclusions, an important caveat has to be made: The distinction between career-oriented and team-oriented commitment was made to find out whether these two factors might differentially predict work behavior. However, these two forms of commitment occur relatively independent of each other and even show a slight positive correlation. Thus, people who are highly career-oriented are not necessarily less committed to their coworkers, and vice versa. Nevertheless, what we have tried to show is that the extent to which people are committed to their personal careers may not be the best criterion for selecting and promoting workers in organizations that rely on the success of collaborative team performances. Indeed, to predict whether people are likely to work together successfully, it seems crucial specifically to assess the extent to which they feel committed to their teams. In sum, the results of this study underline the importance of assessing commitment to particular work aspects, rather than relying on measures of general organizational commitment, to predict specific behavior at work.

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