

CRAFTING A SAFE SPACE: INCLUSION, PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY, AND JOB CRAFTING FOR EMPLOYEES WITH INVISIBLE DISABILITIES.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how felt inclusion and psychological safety shape employees with disabilities' job crafting behaviors. Drawing on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, it is conceptualized that felt inclusion as a key psychological resource that reduces identity management demands and frees cognitive and emotional capacity for proactive role redesign. Job crafting is distinguished into approach-oriented crafting (seeking additional resources, challenges, and enriching relationships) and avoidance-oriented crafting (withdrawing from tasks, responsibilities, or interactions to conserve energy). It was hypothesized that felt inclusion will be positively associated with approach crafting and negatively associated with avoidance crafting. Psychological safety is theorized not as redundant with inclusion but as a resource amplifier that enables employees to act on their felt inclusion by taking interpersonal risks. Accordingly, psychological safety should be positively related to felt inclusion and will moderate the relationships between felt inclusion and both approach and avoidance crafting, strengthening the positive link with approach crafting and the negative link with avoidance crafting. The study employed a cross-sectional survey of 303 employees with concealable disabilities and used validated measures of felt inclusion, psychological safety, and approach and avoidance-oriented job crafting. Hypotheses were tested via multiple regression and moderated regression analyses. Felt inclusion was positively associated with approach job crafting, but its hypothesized negative association with

avoidance crafting was not supported. Psychological safety moderated the relationship between felt inclusion and approach crafting, such that the positive association strengthened under high levels of psychological safety; however, the predicted moderation for avoidance crafting was not found. By integrating COR theory with contemporary work on inclusion, psychological safety, and job crafting, this research clarifies when and how inclusive climates translate into resource gain versus resource spirals for workers with invisible disabilities. The present findings inform organizational practices aimed at fostering inclusion, reducing defensive withdrawal, and enabling more sustainable, growth-oriented forms of proactivity.

**Crafting a Safe Space: Inclusion, Psychological Safety, and Job Crafting for Employees
with Invisible Disabilities.**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Navigating the workplace poses complex challenges, but for individuals with invisible disabilities, these challenges often go unseen, misunderstood, and unaddressed (Santuzzi et al., 2014). Invisible disabilities, also known as concealable disabilities, are those not immediately visible to others. Such conditions, including ADHD, PTSD, chronic illness, and various mental health conditions, profoundly impact how individuals experience work, interact with colleagues, and perceive inclusion (Syma, 2019). The prevalence of invisible disabilities in the workforce reality is far greater than commonly recognized. While conservative federal estimates from the U.S Census Bureau suggest 6.8% of employees have disabilities, recent organizational surveys reveal dramatically higher rates, with up to 40% of employees in some companies reporting invisible disabilities (Santuzzi et al., 2014; Ayres 2024). This statistical discrepancy illuminates a profound disconnect between workplace assumptions and demographic reality. This can suggest that millions of employees are silently managing conditions that significantly impact their work experience.

Although anti-discrimination policies such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide a foundation for protecting the rights of people with disabilities, they do not address the nuanced psychological and organizational dynamics these individuals must navigate daily. These concealable conditions present unique challenges related to stigma, identity management, and resource depletion, which often go unnoticed in traditional inclusion strategies (Santuzzi et al., 2014). Critically, invisible disabilities may significantly impact how employees experience felt inclusion at work and shape the strategic ways they engage with and redesign their jobs. While felt inclusion reflects an individual's internal

sense of belonging and value within the organization (Shore et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2014), psychological safety serves as a contextual foundation that determines whether employees feel secure enough to take the risks associated with such job redesign (Edmondson, 1999, Edmondson & Lei, 2014). This thesis aims to address this gap by examining how felt inclusion influences the type of job crafting (approach versus avoidance; Rudolph et al., 2017) that individuals with invisible disabilities engage in, and the way in which this relationship is shaped by psychological safety (Santuzzi et al., 2014; Syma, 2019).

Research has already demonstrated that workers with disabilities engage in job crafting behaviors, defined as self-initiated changes to job tasks, relational boundaries, or cognitive perceptions at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), although typically at lower frequencies than their colleagues without disabilities (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Markel & Barclay, 2015). Job crafting itself has been shown to be a key strategy in promoting decent work, which is defined by characteristics such as safe conditions, fair compensation, work-life balance, access to healthcare, and social support (Svicher & DiFabio, 2021). Through job crafting, individuals satisfy core human needs for autonomy, competence, and meaning, all of which are frequently undermined in the experience of workers with disabilities (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Rudolph et al., 2017).

However, a notable gap remains, as few studies have explored factors that contribute to employees with invisible disabilities engaging in specific job crafting behaviors, particularly with respect to the way in which environmental factors shape their adaptive responses (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Geyer & Baldrige, 2024). This omission is significant because employees with invisible disabilities face a unique disclosure dilemma (Santuzzi et al., 2014; Syma, 2019) and persistent stigma (Colella & Santuzzi, 2022). For instance,

actively seeking cues for authenticity and belongingness in the workplace helps these individuals build the psychological safety crucial for engaging in interpersonal risk-taking and other proactive strategies like job crafting (Edmondson, 2018; Jansen et al., 2014; Plomp et al., 2019). Therefore, research is needed to explore how environmental factors, such as psychological safety and felt inclusion, influence the proactive strategies of workers with invisible disabilities.

This thesis addresses three gaps in the current literature surrounding the intersection of psychological safety, inclusion, and job crafting for employees with invisible disabilities. First, a theoretical and empirical gap exists where two critical areas of organizational research (i.e., felt inclusion and job crafting) remain largely disconnected, particularly concerning vulnerable employee populations, like employees with disabilities (Svicher & Di Fabio, 2021). Although inclusion has been studied broadly in relation to general well-being (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment; Mor Barak & Levin, 2002), its connection to concrete proactive behaviors like job crafting has received comparatively little attention, and existing inclusion models have rarely been tested against behavioral outcomes (Shore et al., 2011). In the broader literature, job crafting is recognized as a proactive, self-initiated form of job redesign associated with higher engagement, well-being, and performance across diverse employee groups (Rudolph et al., 2017; Tims et al., 2012, Tims et al., 2013). For employees with invisible disabilities, job crafting serves both as a strategy for self-advocacy and a necessary mechanism for adapting to fluctuating challenges, moving beyond just engagement to ensure survival and resource recovery (Santuzzi et al., 2014; Syma, 2019). For instance, an environment where one feels a sense of belonging and authenticity, which are core elements of felt inclusion, can foster perceptions of psychological safety. The perceptions, in turn, may

enable interpersonal risk-taking and make it more feasible for individuals to engage in proactive behaviors such as seeking support, adjusting tasks, or reshaping social interactions (Edmondson, 1999; Jansen et al., 2014; Plomp, 2019). Accordingly, this thesis establishes felt inclusion as an important psychological condition that can allow employees with invisible disabilities to translate inclusive environments into action, specifically into adaptive, self-directed behaviors like job crafting, rather than assuming inclusion alone is sufficient without employee agency.

Second, this thesis contributes a nuanced understanding of job crafting as a behavioral response for employees with invisible disabilities by differentiating between proactive strategies aimed at maximizing resources (approach crafting; Lopper et al., 2023) and defensive strategies aimed at minimizing demands (avoidance crafting; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018). Job crafting scholars have recently developed models that distinguish these promotion-and-prevention focused strategies (Bruning & Campion, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017). This thesis applies this distinction within the context of invisible disabilities, arguing that these employees with invisible disabilities utilize both strategies dynamically in response to their variable conditions (e.g., maximizing engaging tasks during high-energy periods [approach; Lopper et al., 2023] versus reducing hindering social interactions during periods of cognitive strain [avoidance; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018]). This fine-grained perspective moves beyond a monolithic view of job redesign (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). providing a more accurate and actionable framework for understanding how employees with invisible disabilities sustain their careers through adaptive self-management.

Third, despite growing recognition of the role of psychological safety in organizational contexts (Chiumento & Rasmussen; McIntosh et al., 2022), a gap persists in understanding how it functions as a boundary condition that amplifies the experience of felt inclusion, particularly for employees with invisible disabilities. Psychological safety is defined as the shared belief that one can take interpersonal risks without fear of negative consequences, such as humiliation or punishment (Edmondson, 1999). Research has not adequately examined how this construct enables individuals with invisible disabilities to take essential interpersonal risks, such as initiating job crafting behaviors, disclosing their disability, or asking for needed support (Santuzzi et al., 2014). By integrating these constructs, this thesis theorizes and tests how psychological safety buffers perceived interpersonal risks and the fear of negative consequences, thereby empowering employees with invisible disabilities to experience genuine inclusion and subsequently engage in proactive workplace behaviors.

Literature Review

Felt Inclusion as a Psychological Resource

Over the past two decades research on inclusive workplaces has grown substantially, leading to a corresponding increase in organizational diversity practices (Joshi & Roh, 2009), emerging as a promising approach after earlier studies showed inconclusive or even negative associations between workforce diversity and organizational outcomes (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Workplace inclusion moves beyond simply increasing representation to focus on the full integration of all employees into the organizational culture and work processes (Holmes et al., 2020). A significant body of research demonstrates that inclusive workplaces are beneficial for both workers and organizations; Shore et al.'s (2018) review identifies outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and positive affect (Shore et al., 2018). Within the demographic of individuals with invisible disabilities, experiencing felt inclusion is particularly vital. It fosters a sense of psychological safety, enabling them to feel secure and thrive in their work environment (Chiumento & Rasmussen, 2024; Vogus & Taylor, 2018).

The literature distinguishes between two broad classifications of inclusion: inclusion as an organizational practice, and inclusion as an internal, psychological experience (Shore et al., 2011). While organizational practices create the external environment, their true impact hinges on the employee's internal, psychological experience further known as felt inclusion (Jansen et al., 2014). This concept is better represented by the dual fulfilment of two fundamental human needs of belongingness, feeling accepted as a member of the group, and authenticity, feeling valued for one's true self (Jansen et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011). The

need for belongingness is a fundamental human motivation for positive and lasting relationships, rooted in evolutionary psychology; when this need is met, individuals feel secure and are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors that strengthen their connection to the organization (DeWall et al., 2011).

Conversely, social exclusion, which is the direct antithesis of felt inclusion, profoundly threatens this fundamental need, leading to a range of negative cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes, such as increased aggression, impaired self-regulation, and reduced prosocial behavior (DeWall et al., 2011). For employees with invisible disabilities, the experience of felt inclusion is particularly crucial. By fulfilling the dual needs of belongingness and authenticity, felt inclusion directly supports relatedness and competence while signaling a safe environment where authentic self-presentation is possible (Huynh et al., 2020; Volmer et al., 2020). This sense of safety reduces the need for draining identity management strategies, such as the constant resource-intensive effort to conceal one's condition (Santuzzi et al., 2023). Such concealment efforts demand significant cognitive and emotional resources, manifesting as internal distress like anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and feelings of being overwhelmed or frustrated (McIntosh et al., 2022). This continuous self-regulation to hide an identity can interfere with employees' overall well-being and work performance (DeJordy, 2008; Santuzzi et al., 2019).

The distinction between felt inclusion and mere group identification is theoretically important; whereas identification emphasizes shared group identity through Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), felt inclusion captures the interpersonal experience of acceptance and psychological safety necessary for authentic self-presentation. This distinction is particularly salient for employees with invisible disabilities, who often

experience pressure to conceal their conditions and manage normalcy, thereby limiting authentic engagement (Santuzzi et al., 2014). By measuring felt inclusion rather than identification, this study captures whether individuals perceive they can disclose and be authentically themselves at work. Which is a critical precursor to proactive job crafting.

The significance of felt inclusion is best understood through the lens of Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which establishes that individuals strive to gain, protect, and retain valued resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Within this framework, felt inclusion is not merely a positive feeling but a critical psychological resource. When employees experience felt inclusion, they no longer need to expend cognitive and emotional resources on managing their inclusion status or fearing social exclusion (Demerouti, 2025). This conservation of resources frees up mental capacity, which is especially crucial for employees with invisible disabilities, as the process of concealment and managing stigma requires substantial cognitive effort that could otherwise be directed toward productive work behaviors (Brucker & Sundar, 2020). Research consistently shows that felt inclusion is associated with a cascade of positive outcomes, including increased positive affect decreased negative affect, enhanced self-esteem, greater job satisfaction, and stronger organizational commitment (Santuzzi et al., 2014). This evidence supports the gain spiral principle of COR theory, where the acquisition of a key resource (felt inclusion) facilitates the other valuable resources like positive emotions and self-efficacy (Hobfoll et al., 2018). This gain in resources, in turn, enables employees to invest energy in proactive behaviors like approach crafting to obtain further resources, such as skill development or improved work relationships (Demerouti, 2025).

This conservation of mental capacity is consistently highlighted in the literature as being especially crucial for employees with invisible disabilities, freeing up cognitive effort that can be redirected toward productive work behaviors, such as approach crafting (Shore et al., 2018). When resources are low or threatened, employees are in a loss cycle, compelling them to use their remaining energy to protect their resources through avoidance crafting (Hobfoll, 1989; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018). COR theory's fundamental principles, particularly that resource loss is disproportionately more salient than resource gain, and that people must invest resources to protect against resources loss, provide a compelling framework for understanding how employees with invisible disabilities navigate workplace challenges (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Hobfoll, 1989). In environments lacking psychological safety or failing to acknowledge the diverse needs of disabled workers, individuals may resort to avoidance crafting, such as mentally distancing from tasks or reducing responsibilities to preserve energy (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Syma, 2019). Conversely, approach crafting, proactively seeking resources, challenges, or new roles, becomes more viable in climates that signal psychological safety and encourage authenticity (Keating, 2023; Wrzeniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Job Crafting: Approach vs Avoidance

Job crafting refers to the self-initiated changes employees make to the physical, cognitive, and relational boundaries of their work to better align their jobs with personal needs, abilities, and preferences (Wrzeniewski & Dutton, 2001). Rather than waiting for formal job redesign through management or human resources, employees proactively reshape their roles by modifying the tasks they perform, the people they interact with, and the meaning they derive from their work (Niessen et al., 2016). Job crafting is a form of

proactive behavior; it is self-starting, future-oriented, and enables individuals to exercise agency over their work environment (Bindl & Parker, 2011). Importantly, job crafting has been shown to relate positively to work engagement, job satisfaction, and performance across diverse occupational groups (Rudolph et al., 2017; Tims et al., 2012).

However, not all job crafting behaviors are equally beneficial. Over the past decade, organizational researchers have increasingly recognized that job crafting encompasses two distinct and often opposite orientations: approach-oriented crafting and avoidance-oriented crafting (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Lopper et al., 2023). Crucially, recent organizational scholarship identifies these as two independent dimensions rather than opposite ends of a single bipolar spectrum (Lopper et al., 2023; Zhang & Parker, 2019). These two forms of job crafting represent independent factors; employees are not restricted to choosing one or the other and may engage in both approach and avoidance crafting behaviors within the same work context (Lopper et al., 2023; Makikangas, 2018). For example, an employee might proactively seek out a challenging new project to foster professional growth (approach) while, at the same time, intentionally delegating or shielding themselves from certain stressful tasks to conserve energy (avoidance). This ability to balance distinct crafting strategies underscores that job crafting is not a zero-sum game, but a dynamic, multifaceted process of managing job demands and personal resources (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Lopper et al., 2023). Understanding this distinction is essential for explaining how contextual factors like felt inclusion shape employees' proactive behavioral responses (Santuzzi et al., 2014).

Approach-oriented crafting, also termed promotion-focused crafting, reflects employees' motivation to acquire, expand, and enhance valued resources at work

(Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018). Individuals engaged in approach crafting seek to increase the positive and motivating aspects of their jobs (Tims & Bakker, 2010). This can take several forms: seeking out new tasks or additional responsibilities, volunteering for challenging assignments, actively requesting feedback or coaching from supervisors or colleagues, building new relationships at work, and reframing job tasks to emphasize their personal meaning and contribution (Lopper et al., 2023, Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Approach crafting is fundamentally about doing more or doing better; it is rooted in a mindset of growth and advancement. Meta-analytic evidence reveals that approach-oriented crafting is consistently and positively associated with work engagement, job performance, person-job fit, and employee well-being (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017). This positive relationship operates through COR theories gain spiral concept, as employees accumulate resources through their crafting efforts, they possess greater capacity to invest further, acquire additional resources, and deepen their engagement with their work (Hobfoll et al., 2018). For employees with invisible disabilities, the ability to engage in approach crafting is particularly meaningful, as it represents a shift from resource protection to resource acquisition and growth.

In contrast, avoidance-oriented crafting, also termed prevention-focused crafting, reflects employees' motivation to protect existing resources and reduce threats or demands (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018). Rather than expanding, avoidance crafting is about withdrawing from or reducing negative or draining aspects of work (Demerouti & Peeters, 2018). Examples include delegating or avoiding certain tasks, limiting the scope or complexity of responsibilities, reducing social interaction with colleagues or customers, taking mental distance from stressful aspects of the job, and consciously reducing one's effort

or involvement (Lopper et al., 2023; Demerouti & Peeters, 2018). Avoidance crafting is rooted in a mindset of self-protection and resource conservation (Hobfoll, 1989). Although avoidance crafting may serve a short-term protective function, reducing immediate stress or conserving energy, research shows that it is negatively or neutrally related to work engagement and performance overtime (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Lopper et al., 2023). Avoidance crafting may therefore initiate a loss spiral. As employees reduce their involvement, they may disengage further, miss opportunities for growth, and experience compounding losses in motivation and performance (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018).

For employees with invisible disabilities, the approach-avoidance distinction becomes particularly critical. Their workplace context often creates resource threats, such as fear of disclosure, experienced of anticipated stigma, and the cognitive burden of concealment, that activate avoidance crafting, even when approach crafting might yield better long-term outcomes (Brucker & Sundar, 2020; Santuzzi et al., 2019). The constant effort required to conceal a disability and manage the experience of workplace exclusion functions as a significant resource drain, triggering the loss spirals characteristic of avoidance crafting (Santuzzi et al., 2014). For example, an employee with an invisible disability may mentally distance themselves from collaborative work (avoidance crafting) because they fear that full engagement will reveal their disability or expose them to judgement (Santuzzi et al., 2014).

However, the presence of felt inclusion may shift this dynamic (Coll & Mignonac, 2022; Shore et al., 2018). When employees with invisible disabilities experience high felt inclusion, they conserve the cognitive and emotional resources otherwise spent on managing

stigma and concealment (Santuzzi et al., 2019). This conserved mental capacity is especially crucial as it eliminated the energy drain associated with managing inclusion status, concealing disability, or managing stigma (Shore et al., 2018). This capacity then enables them to invest in approach crafting, to seek new challenges, to build relationships, and to engage more fully with their work (Santuzzi et al., 2019). Thus, understanding the interplay between resource threats (which enables avoidance crafting) is central to explaining how felt inclusion shapes the job crafting behavior of employees with invisible disabilities (Hobfoll, 1989; Santuzzi et al., 2019; Shore et al., 2011). When felt inclusion provides psychological safety and conserves resources previously devoted to concealment, employees transition from loss spirals to gain spirals, fundamentally altering the type and quality of crafting behavior they pursue (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Santuzzi et al., 2019).

Felt inclusion functions as a crucial psychological resource that enables proactive engagement. According to COR theory's principle of gain spirals, individuals who possess a surplus of resources are motivated to invest them to acquire further resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Feeling included, which is linked to positive outcomes like engagement and well-being (Shore et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2014), provides the psychological capital and safety necessary to engage in proactive, expansion-oriented behaviors (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018). When employees perceive their workplace as inclusive and their authentic selves as valued, they experience reduced threat and enhanced confidence that modification of their roles and assumptions of new challenges will be supported rather than met with backlash (Santuzzi et al., 2019). Social cognitive theory further supports this relationship: when individuals possess self-efficacy beliefs rooted in perceived organizational support and belonging, they are more likely to pursue self-initiated, goal-directed behaviors (Bandura,

2006). The link between feeling valued and engagement in positive proactive behaviors has been well-established, providing a theoretical parallel for job crafting behaviors (Organ, 1990; Podsakoff et al., 2000). This alignment suggests that employees who experience successful integration and felt inclusion engage in self-advocacy and adapt their roles in ways that constitute approach crafting, actively seeking resources and challenges that align with their strengths (Brucker & Sundar, 2023).

H1a: Felt Inclusion will be positively associated with approach crafting.

Avoidance behaviors are primarily adopted as a defensive strategy to prevent the loss of threatened resources; therefore, felt inclusion is expected to substantially mitigate this threat (Hobfoll, 1989). When employees feel they belong, are authentically valued, and perceive psychological safety, the anticipated threat of social exclusion and resource loss diminishes significantly (Jansen et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011). This reduction in threat perception lessens the necessity to engage in defensive, withdrawal-oriented behaviors such as reducing social contact, limiting one's responsibilities, or mentally distancing from work (Santuzzi et al., 2019).

Conversely, a lack of inclusion and the continued need for concealment are linked to resource depletion and negative psychological states, anxiety, diminished self-esteem, and feelings of inauthenticity, which are primary drivers of avoidance crafting (Santuzzi et al., 2019). Prevention-focused avoidance crafting is empirically linked to burnout, disengagement, and reduced well-being (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017), outcomes that directly contrast with the psychological benefits associated with felt inclusion. For instance, an employee with an invisible disability who experiences exclusion may resort to avoidance crafting by withdrawing from social interactions or limiting their

visibility in meetings, thereby reducing opportunities for growth and deepening their disengagement. Given that felt inclusion is theoretically positioned to reduce resource threats and activate positive psychological states, a negative relationship with avoidance crafting is expected. Moreover, to the extent that felt inclusion redirects cognitive resources away from threat-monitoring toward proactive engagement, employees should demonstrate less reliance on defensive crafting strategies (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

H1b: Felt Inclusion will be negatively associated with avoidance job crafting.

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is defined as a shared belief that one can take interpersonal risks, such as speaking up, admitting mistakes, asking questions, or challenging the status quo, without fear of punishment, embarrassment, or retaliation (Edmondson, 1999). Psychological safety does not emerge in a vacuum; it is shaped by contextual factors including team dynamics, organizational policies, and leadership behaviors. Supportive leadership, in particular, signals to employees that interpersonal risk-taking will not be punished, helping to establish the shared belief that the environment is safe (Edmondson, 1999). The Psychological Safety Inventory (PSI) used in this study captures five related dimensions: Interpersonal Risk-Taking, Mutual Trust/Respect, Organizational/Structural Support, Supportive Leadership, and Identity/Clarity (Plouffe et al., 2023). These dimensions are strongly intercorrelated and are conceptualized as indicators of a single overarching construct. Consistent with prior research using the total PSI score (Plouffe et al., 2023), this study used the composite score rather than examining individual subfactors.

In contrast to felt inclusion, which is an individual-level psychological resource rooted in belongingness and authenticity, psychological safety is a contextual resource

embedded in the team or organizational climate (Edmondson, 1999; Frazier et al., 2017). Empirical research has established that psychological safety is positively associated with proactive work behaviors, learning, and adaptive engagement (Frazier et al., 2017; Newman et al., 2017). By buffering employees from anxiety related to impression management and social threat, psychological safety liberates cognitive and emotional resources that might otherwise be devoted to identity management or monitoring for interpersonal danger. These freed-up resources can then be reinvested in exploration, learning, and role expansion, creating wider channels for meaningful engagement and growth (Edmondson & Lei, 2014; Shore et al., 2011).

Current literature often treats psychological safety as a parallel construct to inclusion, yet it functions more precisely as a resource amplifier that strengthens the effects of felt inclusion (Edmondson & Lei, 2014; Newman et al., 2017). For employees with invisible disabilities, who navigate unspoken fears, past experiences of stigma, and ongoing concerns about disclosure, psychological safety is particularly critical (Santuzzi et al., 2014). A psychologically safe workplace environment enables individuals with concealable disabilities to craft their roles in empowering, proactive ways, whereas unsafe environments may render inclusion experiences performative and superficial (Santuzzi et al., 2019). This section examines whether psychological safety moderates the relationship between felt inclusion and job crafting, testing if it strengthens approach crafting and weakens avoidance crafting for employees with invisible disabilities.

Psychological safety serves as a catalyst that transforms the subjective experience of inclusion into proactive behavioral action (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Although an employee may intellectually feel they belong and are valued, psychological safety determines whether

they will act on that feeling by taking interpersonal risks and engaging in proactive role redesign. High psychological safety lowers the perceived risk of trying new approaches, suggesting changes, or expanding one's role, thereby enabling approach crafting behaviors (Edmondson, 1999; Jansen et al., 2014). For instance, an employee with an invisible disability may feel genuinely included but still harbor concerns that requesting a challenging assignment might draw unwanted attention to their disability or be perceived as overstepping. Psychological safety removes this fear, empowering them to pursue approach crafting. According to COR theory's gain spiral principle, when employees feel both included and psychologically safe, they possess abundant psychological resources and perceive the environment as supportive of resource investment. This positions them to confidently pursue approach crafting, seeking new challenges, building relationships, and expanding their capabilities (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Psychological safety is empirically linked to risk-taking behaviors, voice, and proactive engagement, all conceptually aligned with approach crafting's expansion-oriented nature (Edmondson, 1999; Newman et al., 2017). Thus, psychological safety amplifies the positive relationship between felt inclusion and approach crafting by enabling employees to translate their sense of belonging into proactive, growth-oriented action.

H2a: Psychological safety moderates the relationship between felt inclusion and approach crafting, such that this positive relationship strengthens as psychological safety increases.

Psychological safety directly counteracts the threats that trigger avoidance crafting. When an employee feels safe from interpersonal harm and secure in their authentic self-expression, the motivation to retreat, reduce social contact, and minimize visibility becomes

largely unnecessary (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). High psychological safety signals to employees, particularly those with invisible disabilities managing stigma concerns, that defensive, resource-conserving behaviors are not required for survival or acceptance in the workplace (Santuzzi et al., 2019). According to COR theory's loss spiral principle, when psychological safety is absent, employees experience heightened threat perception and engage in defensive resource protection, which manifests as avoidance crafting (Hobfoll, 1989). Low psychological safety is associated with elevated stress, anxiety, and burnout, psychological states strongly correlated with avoidance crafting (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Newman et al., 2017). For example, when an employee with an invisible disability perceives the workplace as unsafe, they may resort to avoidance crafting, withdrawing from collaborative work, limiting their visibility in meetings, or reducing their role scope to conserve energy and minimize exposure to potential stigma. Conversely, when both felt inclusion and psychological safety are high, employees' threat-detection systems are effectively "de-activated," freeing them from the need for defensive, withdrawal-oriented behaviors (Kahn, 1990; Shore et al., 2011). Psychological safety strengthens the negative relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance crafting by eliminating the underlying threat perception that drives avoidance strategies. Thus, the combination of high felt inclusion and high psychological safety should most powerfully suppress avoidance crafting and redirect resources toward proactive engagement (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

H2b: Psychological safety moderates the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance crafting, such that this negative association strengthens as psychological safety increases.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS

Participants

This study recruited a sample of currently employed adults via a survey generated within Qualtrics and distributed across the specialized crowdsourcing, CloudResearch Connect (Douglas et al., 2023; Hauser et al., 2022). This methodological choice supports data quality when collecting information from diverse occupational populations, including individuals with invisible disabilities who may be underrepresented in traditional sampling methods (Douglas et al., 2023). The core inclusion criteria required participants to be 18 years of age or older, fluent in reading and understanding American English, and to be employed (full-time or part-time), reside within the United States, and have an invisible disability.

The recruitment material presented to potential participants on the CloudResearch platform used a neutral, non-stigmatizing description such as: “A study on disability, work experiences, and adapting your job.” This framing was designed to attract participants without priming specific responses or creating discomfort about disability status (Appendix A). Invisible disability status was verified using a screener at the beginning of the survey (see Appendix B for the screening item). Participants also classified their invisible disability type into categories including psychological, physical, and cognitive (Santuzzi et al., 2024; see Appendix C for classification items). This classification allowed for descriptive analysis of sample composition while acknowledging the heterogeneity of invisible disabilities in workplace contexts.

To determine the minimum number of observations necessary for the study, an a priori power analysis was conducted using G*power 3.1. This analysis specifically targeted

an increase in R^2 within a linear multiple regression model, which is appropriate for evaluating the unique variance explained by interaction terms in moderation hypotheses. However, given that interaction terms typically yield small effects (McClelland & Judd, 1993; Aquinis et al., 2005), and there is no existing research on felt inclusion, job crafting, and psychological safety to yield a reliable existing estimate, the current study will use a small effect size of .04. In the current field, there are only a few studies that evaluated psychological safety and job crafting (Lee, 2022; Lim et al., 2025), but they are limited in that they did not evaluate moderation, or their conceptualizations of job crafting are different. However, they also still found relatively small effects justifying the current use of a small effect size. The regression model will include three tested predictors (representing the main effects of felt inclusion, psychological safety, and their interaction, and three covariates of disability classification [physical, cognitive, psychological impairment]) within a full model comprising six total predictors. According to this a priori test, a minimum sample size of $N = 277$ participants is necessary to achieve the desired power of 0.80. An additional 55 participants (20.00%) will be collected to account for data quality issues, for a total of 332 participants.

Through CloudResearch Connect, 332 employed adults with invisible disabilities completed the survey and were compensated for their participation. All participants were prescreened by CloudResearch as having a disability through the platform's built-in targeting feature and confirmed their eligibility through screening items at the start of the survey (see Appendix C). These responses were screened for data quality using a multi-step process. Five attention check items were embedded throughout the survey (e.g., "Please select Strongly Agree for this question"). Twelve participants who failed more than 3 of these 5 attention

checks were removed, as this pattern suggested they were not reading item content carefully. One additional participant who failed 2 attention checks and provided identical responses across all survey items was also removed; this response pattern indicated both inattention and a lack of meaningful engagement, making the data unreliable for analysis. Six participants who did not complete an embedded quality check question were removed, as the completeness of their survey data could not be verified.

Finally, 10 participants were classified as careless responders and removed based on two complementary indices. Longstring analysis was calculated across the 16 items of the Perceived Group Inclusion Scale (PGIS) and the attention check item, with a cutoff of 5 or more consecutive identical responses used to identify careless responding. Mahalanobis distance analysis detects multivariate outliers by measuring how far each participant's overall pattern of responses deviates from the sample average, flagging participants whose response vectors were improbable under the assumed multivariate normal distribution. Participants who were flagged by both indices were removed, ensuring that only those flagged by both methods (rather than one alone) were excluded, reducing the risk of false positives. The final analytic sample consisted of 303 employed adults with invisible disabilities.

Participants ranged in age from 19 to 74 years old, with a mean of 39.21 years ($SD = 10.61$). Regarding gender identity, 168 participants (55.4%) identified as female, 121 (39.9%) as male, 2 (0.7%) as trans woman/trans female, 2 (0.7%) as trans man/trans male, 8 (2.6%) as a custom identity (self-described), and 2 (0.7%) preferred not to answer. For racial or ethnic heritage (participants could select all that apply), most participants identified as Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American Identity ($n = 209$, 69.0%). The next highest categories were the participants who identified as Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African

American ($n = 46$, 15.2%), then Latinx or Hispanic American identity ($n = 29$, 9.6%), East Asian or Asian American identity ($n = 21$, 6.9%), South Asian or Indian American identity ($n = 5$, 1.7%), Middle Eastern or Arab American identity ($n = 1$, 0.3%), Native or Alaskan Native identity ($n = 11$, 3.6%), custom racial or ethnical heritage ($n = 2$, 0.7%), and prefer not to answer ($n = 4$, 1.3%).

Regarding employment status, all participants were employed full-time (35 or more hours per week). Organizational tenure averaged 76.55 months ($SD = 46.56$; $M = 6.40$ years, $SD = 3.90$ years), with a median of 48 months (4.00 years). Participants held over 25 unique job titles spanning 21 occupational fields, with the highest 3 being education, training, and library ($n = 37$, 12.2%), computer and mathematical ($n = 35$, 11.6%), and healthcare support ($n = 28$, 9.2%).

In terms of disability classification, psychological impairment was the most endorsed category (67%), followed by physical (41%) and cognitive (36%); participants could report multiple impairment types. The majority (89%) classified their disability as concealable rather than visible. Participants were pre-screened by CloudResearch Connect using the platform's disability identification criteria, which included nine disability categories. Participants could select multiple categories. The most frequently endorsed categories were mental health disability ($n = 175$, 57.80%), health disability ($n = 73$, 24.1%), and mobility disability ($n = 44$, 14.5%). Other reported categories included other disability ($n = 39$, 12.9%), learning disability ($n = 29$, 9.6%), visual disability ($n = 29$, 9.6%), developmental disability ($n = 20$, 6.6%), auditory disability ($n = 17$, 5.6%), and speech disability ($n = 12$, 4.0%).

Table 1*Additional Occupational Demographics of Participants (N = 303)*

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Medicine	39	12.9
Education and Training	37	12.2
Other	37	12.2
Information Technology	35	11.6
Government and Public Administration	20	6.6
Finance	20	6.6
Manufacturing	18	5.9
Business Management and Administration	17	5.6
Retail	14	4.6
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	13	4.3
Hospitality and Tourism	12	4.0
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	9	3.0
Marketing and Sales	8	2.6
Social Sciences	7	2.3
Arts	5	1.7
Legal	4	1.3
Architecture and Construction	3	1.0
Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources	2	0.7
I'd Rather Not Say	1	0.3
Military	1	0.3
Policing	1	0.3

Note. N = 303. Percentages are based on the total sample. Participants could report only one occupational field.

Design and Procedure

This research employed a quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional survey design. This design is ideally suited for determining the relationship strength among psychological constructs that cannot be ethically or practically manipulated in an organizational setting (Stone et al., 1992). Specifically, it allowed for the simultaneous measurement of the predictor (felt inclusion [Jansen et al., 2014]), moderator (psychological safety [Plouffe et al., 2023]), and outcomes (approach/avoidance job crafting [Lopper et al. 2024]) to test the

hypothesized moderation model using established regression techniques. The cross-sectional approach was particularly appropriate for examining how felt inclusion and psychological safety interact to influence job crafting behaviors among employees with invisible disabilities. Unlike mediation models, which require temporal precedence to establish indirect pathways, moderation effects can be reliably detected in single-timepoint designs because they represent conditional relationships. That is, how the strength or direction of one relationship depends on the level of another variable (Muller et al., 2005). This was especially important given the longitudinal research with this population is limited, and a cross-sectional design would permit efficient data collection while still testing theoretically meaningful interaction effects.

The participant procedure began with recruitment on the CloudResearch platform (see Appendix A for recruitment materials), where individuals who met the initial filtering criteria, being at least 18 years old, currently employed full-time in the United States, and pre-screened by CloudResearch as having a disability, were directed to the Qualtrics survey link. Upon arrival at the survey, participants were presented with an electronic consent form (Appendix B) that detailed the study's purpose, potential risks and benefits, the voluntary nature of participation, the right to withdraw without penalty, and the assurance of anonymity. Participants moved to a screening page to verify all eligibility criteria, then they were asked to provide consent, followed by quality assurance checks for attention and bot behavior. If deemed eligible and attentive, they proceed to the data collection phase, which took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey flow presented with the three main measurement scales (Felt Inclusion (Jansen et al., 2014), Psychological Safety (Plouffe et al., 2023), and Job Crafting (Lopper et al., 2023) in a randomized order determined by Qualtrics,

followed by standard demographics including a classification of their invisible disability type. Upon completion of the survey, participants navigated to a debriefing page (Appendix D), which disclosed the purpose of the study and provides contact and support resources.

Measures

All core study variables were assessed using previously validated, self-report measures adapted for the workplace. Each scale utilized a Likert-type response format ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*), providing consistency across measurement instruments and facilitates data interpretation. Scores for each construct were created by calculating the mean of the individual items, with higher scores consistently indicating higher levels of the construct. One attention check item was embedded within each measure, totaling three attention checks included, to monitor response consistency and identify inattentive respondents (Craig & Meade, 2012). The complete items and format used are detailed in Appendix C.

Felt Inclusion. Felt inclusion was measured using an organizational adaptation of the Perceived Group Inclusion Scale (PGIS) developed by Jansen et al. (2014). This 16-item measure captures the experience of inclusion as the satisfaction of two core needs: belonging (feeling accepted) and authenticity (feeling free to be one's unique self). The original PGIS was adapted by replacing language referencing "the group" with language referencing "my organization," consistent with the organizational context of the study and the need to assess inclusion experiences in work settings rather than general groups. Sample items include "This organization gives me the feeling that I belong" (belonging dimension), and "This organization encourages me to be who I am" (authenticity dimension). The PGIS has demonstrated robust internal consistency, generally showing Cronbach's alpha scores ranging

from .93 to .97 across subscales and total scores, and supports the underlying one-factor structure in various settings (Jansen et al., 2014). In the current sample, the scale demonstrated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .98$, $\omega = .99$). The total PGIS score was used in all analyses, rather than the belonging and authenticity subdimensions separately. The specific item wording and instructions used in this study are presented in Appendix C.

Psychological Safety. Psychological safety was assessed using the Psychological Safety Inventory (PSI), a comprehensive self-report measure developed by Plouffe et al. (2023). This measure was developed to address the need for a more nuanced measurement of psychological safety in occupational settings. The PSI comprises 30 items across five distinct factors: Interpersonal Risk-Taking, Mutual Trust/Respect, Organizational/Structural Support, Supportive Leadership, and Identity/Clarity (Plouffe et al., 2023). The total PSI score was used in all analyses, rather than the five subdimension scores separately. A sample item is “My team cares about my well-being.” This multidimensional approach aligns with the broader understanding that psychological safety encompasses not only interpersonal risk-taking but also the supportive organizational structures and leadership behaviors that enable authentic, engaged work participation (Plouffe et al., 2023). In previous studies, the PSI demonstrated high internal consistency with an overall $\alpha = .95$. It correlated positively with Edmondson’s established 7-item Psychological Safety Scale ($r \sim .60-.80$) as well as measures of servant leadership, team climate for innovation, and perceived organizational support (Plouffe et al., 2023). These correlations support its convergent validity and its utility for assessing and improving psychological safety in diverse organizational contexts. In the current sample, the total scale demonstrated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .97$, $\omega = .98$). The specific item wording and instructions used in this study are presented in Appendix C.

Approach and Avoidance Job Crafting. Approach and avoidance job crafting behaviors was measured using the Approach–Avoidance Job Crafting Scale (AAJCS), validated by Lopper et al. (2024). This scale is designed specifically to capture the hierarchical distinction between job crafting orientations: Approach Crafting (promotion-focused efforts like increasing resources or challenges) and Avoidance Crafting (prevention-focused efforts like reducing hindering demands or withdrawing). The AAJCS reflects a hierarchical structure where both approach and avoidance crafting comprise four dimensions each: behavioral resources, behavioral demands, cognitive resources, and cognitive demands (Lopper et al., 2023). Consistent with the study's hypotheses, approach crafting and avoidance crafting were analyzed as separate outcomes rather than combined into a single total score. Sample items include “I look for tasks that enable me to use my skills” (Approach crafting) and “I postpone tasks that I consider unnecessary” (Avoidance crafting). In the current sample, approach crafting ($\alpha = .94$, $\omega = .95$) and avoidance crafting ($\alpha = .93$, $\omega = .95$) both demonstrated strong reliability. The specific item wording and instructions used in this study are presented in Appendix C.

Demographic and Disability Classification

Participants provided demographic data on age (in years), gender (male, female, non-binary, or prefer to self-describe), race and ethnicity, and work characteristics including organizational tenure (in years), current employment status (full-time, part-time, or recently employed), and job title or occupational category. In line with recent multidimensional approach to disability classification in workplace research (Santuzzi et al., 2024), participants were asked to classify their invisible disability type using three classification items: whether their primary condition was mental health-related, chronic physical, neurodevelopmental, or

another form of non-visible impairment; whether their disability was present from birth or acquired later in life; and whether the disability is typically visible to others or concealable. This multi-dimensional classification allows for nuanced descriptive analysis of the sample composition while respecting the diversity of invisible disability experiences in the workplace.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Preliminary Testing and Model Specifications

Analyses were conducted in R version 4.6.0 (R Core Team, 2026) using several statistical packages. Reliability analyses were conducted using the *psych* package (Revelle, 2024) and regression models were estimated using the base R linear model function. The *car* package (Fox & Weisberg, 2019) was used to evaluate multicollinearity, and the *interactions* package (Long, 2024) was used to probe significant interactions.

Hypotheses were tested using hierarchical multiple regression conducted separately for each outcome variable: approach job crafting and avoidance job crafting. To test the core moderation hypotheses, a three-step entry process was utilized for both regression models. Physical disability, psychological disability, and cognitive disability screen indicators (dummy-coded as 0 = did not report that disability type, 1 = reported that disability type) were entered as control variables in Step 1. Felt inclusion and psychological safety were entered as main effects in Step 2. The interaction term between felt inclusion and psychological safety was entered in Step 3. A significant coefficient for the interaction term was used to evaluate moderation. Significant interactions were interpreted using follow-up simple slopes evaluated at the mean and at $\pm 1SD$ of psychological safety ($-1SD = 4.12$, $M = 5.19$, $+1SD = 6.26$), as well as Johnson-Neyman analyses to identify the exact region of significance.

Assumptions of hierarchical multiple regression were tested for both the approach and avoidance models. Normality of residuals was assessed through visual inspection of Q-Q plots and residual plots, which indicated no meaningful departures from normality. Given the large sample size ($N = 303$), the Central Limit Theorem supports the robustness of ordinary

least squares regression to minor departures from normality (Lumley et al., 2002).

Homoscedasticity was assessed using the Breusch-Pagan test, which was significant for both the approach model ($BP = 27.17, p < .001$) and the avoidance model ($BP = 27.37, p < .001$), suggesting some heteroscedasticity. This limitation is noted, and future research may consider robust standard errors. Independence of residuals was evaluated using the Durbin-Watson statistic, which was 1.76 for the approach model ($p = .017$) and 2.00 for the avoidance model ($p = .507$). The approach model showed marginal autocorrelation, though the value was close to 2.00, indicating only slight deviation. The avoidance model showed no autocorrelation. Multicollinearity was assessed using generalized variance inflation factors for the centered regression models. All adjusted GVIF values were close to 1.00, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern in the final regression models.

Composite scores representing the average response across items were created for the primary study variables. See Table 2 for descriptive statistics and correlations. Felt inclusion was strongly and positively related to psychological safety, $r(301) = .81, p < .001$. Approach job crafting was positively correlated with felt inclusion, $r(301) = .60, p < .001$, and psychological safety, $r(301) = .61, p < .001$. Avoidance job crafting was negatively correlated with felt inclusion, $r(301) = -.12, p = .032$, and psychological safety, $r(301) = -.13, p = .021$.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	α	1	2	3	4
1. Felt inclusion	5.11	1.26	1.00	7.00	.98	--	--	--	--
2. Psychological safety	5.19	1.07	1.00	7.00	.97	.81***	--	--	--
3. Approach job crafting	5.14	0.91	1.42	7.00	.94	.60***	.61***	--	--
4. Avoidance job crafting	3.68	1.01	1.08	6.58	.93	-.12*	-.13*	-.12*	--

Note. $N = 303$. M = mean; SD = standard deviation. All variables were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7. α = Cronbach's alpha. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1a

Hypothesis 1a predicted that felt inclusion would be positively associated with approach job crafting. The correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between felt inclusion and approach job crafting, $r(301) = .60, p < .001$. In the main effects model (see Table 3), step 1 with the control variables did not significantly predict approach job crafting, $F(3,299) = 1.61, p = .187, R^2 = .02$. The overall Step 2 model was significant, $F(5,297) = 43.07, p < .001, R^2 = .42$, adjusted $R^2 = .41$ and the addition of felt inclusion and psychological safety in Step 2 significantly improved the model, $\Delta R^2 = .40, \Delta F(2,297) = 103.42, p < .001$. Felt inclusion was a significant positive predictor of approach job crafting, $b = 0.25, SE = 0.05, p < .001$, indicating that participants who reported higher felt inclusion also reported greater engagement in approach crafting. Therefore, Hypothesis 1a was supported.

Table 3

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results for Predicting Approach Crafting

Table 3.1 Step 1: Controls

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	5.58	0.23	23.96	< .001	-
Physical disability	-0.20	0.10	-1.98	.049	.013
Psychological disability	-0.02	0.11	-0.18	.861	.000
Cognitive disability	-0.05	0.11	-0.48	.632	.001

Table 3.2 Step 2: Main effects

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	2.85	0.27	10.46	< .001	-
Physical disability	-0.13	0.08	-1.61	.108	.009
Psychological disability	-0.10	0.09	-1.13	.262	.004
Cognitive disability	-0.05	0.09	-0.58	.559	.001
Felt inclusion	0.25	0.05	4.50	< .001	.064
Psychological safety	0.28	0.06	4.31	< .001	.059

Note. $N = 303$. Disability indicators were dummy coded (0 = did not report that disability type, 1 = reported that disability type).

Hypothesis 1b

Hypothesis 1b predicted that felt inclusion would be negatively associated with avoidance job crafting. This hypothesis was tested using the same hierarchical structure, with disability covariates entered in Step 1 and felt inclusion and psychological safety entered in Step 2 (see Table 4). Step 1 with the control variables was marginally non-significant, $F(3, 299) = 2.59, p = .053, R^2 = .03$. The addition of felt inclusion and psychological safety in Step 2 did not significantly improve the model, $\Delta R^2 = .02, \Delta F(2, 297) = 2.79, p = .063$. The overall Step 2 model was significant, $F(5, 297) = 2.66, p = .023, R^2 = .04$. In the main effects model, felt inclusion was not a significant predictor of avoidance job crafting ($b = -0.04, SE = 0.08, p = .581$), nor was psychological safety ($b = 0.05, SE = 0.09, p = .589$). The bivariate correlation was negative but small, $r(301) = -.12, p = .032$, but this relationship did not remain significant after accounting for other variables. Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was not supported. This weaker relationship suggests that while felt inclusion is a primary driver for proactive, resource-seeking behaviors (approach crafting), avoidance crafting may be influenced by different psychological mechanisms, such as resource conservation or withdrawal in response to high strain.

Table 4

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results for Predicting Avoidance Crafting

Table 4.1 Step 1: Controls

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	3.18	0.26	12.41	< .001
Physical disability	0.17	0.11	1.50	.136
Psychological disability	0.27	0.12	2.16	.032
Cognitive disability	-0.07	0.12	-0.60	.548

Table 4.2 Step 2: Main effects

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	3.80	0.40	9.40	< .001
Physical disability	0.14	0.12	1.18	.241
Psychological disability	0.30	0.13	2.34	.020
Cognitive disability	-0.08	0.13	-0.61	.545
Felt inclusion	-0.04	0.08	-0.55	.581
Psychological safety	0.05	0.09	0.54	.589

Note. N = 303. Disability screen indicators were dummy-coded (dummy-coded as 0 = did not report that disability type, 1 = reported that disability type).

Hypothesis 2a

Hypothesis 2a predicted that psychological safety would moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and approach job crafting, such that the positive relationship would strengthen as psychological safety increased. The addition of the interaction term significantly improved model fit, $\Delta F(1, 296) = 25.42, p < .001, \Delta R^2 = .05$ (see Table 5). The interaction between felt inclusion and psychological safety was statistically significant, $b = 0.10, SE = 0.02, t = 5.04, p < .001$. These results indicate that psychological safety significantly moderates the relationship between felt inclusion and approach job crafting, supporting Hypothesis 2a.

Table 5

Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Approach Job Crafting

Table 5.1 Step 1: Covariates

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	5.58	0.23	23.96	< .001	-
Physical disability	-0.20	0.10	-1.98	.049	.013
Psychological disability	-0.02	0.11	-0.18	.861	.000
Cognitive disability	-0.05	0.11	-0.48	.632	.001

Table 5.2 Step 2: Main effects

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	2.85	0.27	10.46	< .001	-
Physical disability	-0.13	0.08	-1.61	.108	.009
Psychological disability	-0.10	0.09	-1.13	.262	.004
Cognitive disability	-0.05	0.09	-0.58	.559	.001
Felt inclusion	0.25	0.05	4.50	< .001	.064
Psychological safety	0.28	0.06	4.31	< .001	.059

Table 5.3 Step 3: Interaction

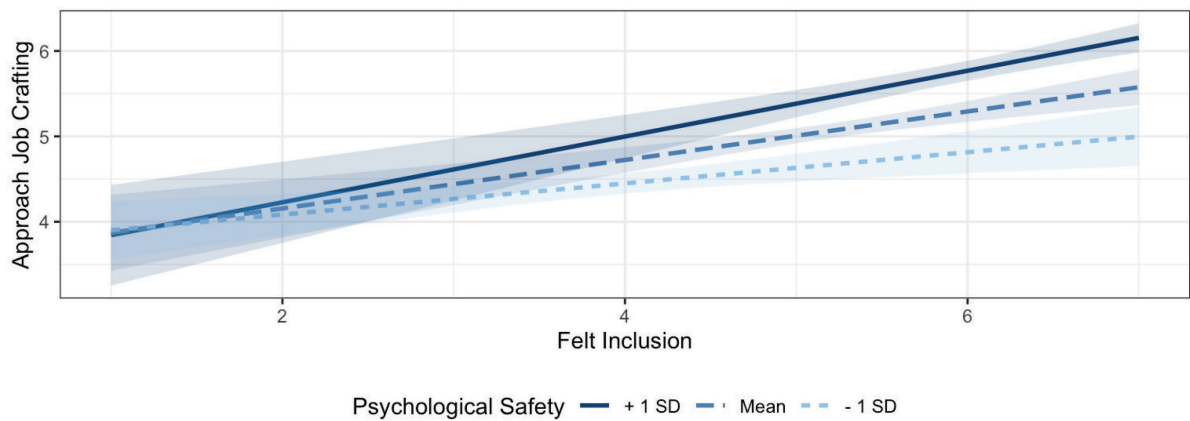
Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	4.60	0.43	10.59	< .001	-
Physical disability	-0.08	0.08	-1.08	.282	.004
Psychological disability	-0.11	0.08	-1.31	.190	.006
Cognitive disability	-0.06	0.08	-0.74	.458	.002
Felt inclusion	-0.21	0.10	-1.99	.047	.013
Psychological safety	-0.12	0.10	-1.21	.228	.005
Felt inclusion × Psychological safety	0.10	0.02	5.04	< .001	.078

Note. N = 303. Disability screen indicators were dummy-coded (dummy-coded as 0 = did not report that disability type, 1 = reported that disability type).

To interpret the significant interaction, simple slopes were examined at low ($-1 SD$), average, and high ($+1 SD$) levels of psychological safety (see Figure 1). The positive relationship between felt inclusion and approach job crafting was significant at all three levels: at low psychological safety ($-1 SD = 4.12$); at average psychological safety ($M = 5.19$); and at high psychological safety ($+1 SD = 6.26$). Thus, felt inclusion was positively related to approach job crafting at all tested levels of psychological safety, but the relationship became stronger as psychological safety increased.

Figure 1

Interaction Between Felt Inclusion and Psychological Safety Predicting Approach Job Crafting



Note. Interaction between felt inclusion and psychological safety predicting approach job crafting. Simple slopes are plotted at low (-1 *SD*), mean, and high (+1 *SD*) levels of psychological safety.

Table 6

Simple Slopes for Felt Inclusion Predicting Approach Job Crafting at Levels of Psychological Safety

Level of psychological safety	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Low psychological safety (-1 <i>SD</i>)	0.18	0.05	3.38	< .001
Average psychological safety	0.28	0.05	5.35	< .001
High psychological safety (+1 <i>SD</i>)	0.39	0.06	6.49	< .001

Note. The Johnson-Neyman analysis indicated that the slope of felt inclusion was significant when psychological safety was above 3.41. The observed range of psychological safety was 1.00 to 7.00.

Hypothesis 2b

Hypothesis 2b predicted that psychological safety would moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting, such that the negative association would strengthen as psychological safety increased. This hypothesis was tested using the same hierarchical moderated regression structure, with disability covariates in Step 1, felt inclusion and psychological safety in Step 2, and the interaction term in Step 3 (see Table 7). The addition of the interaction term did not significantly improve model fit, $\Delta F(1, 296) = 1.06$, $p = .304$, $\Delta R^2 = .00$. The interaction between felt inclusion and psychological safety was not significant, $b = -0.03$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = -1.03$, $p = .304$. Psychological safety did not moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting. Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

Table 7

Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Avoidance Job Crafting

Table 7.1 Step 1: Covariates

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	3.18	0.26	12.41	< .001	-
Physical disability	0.17	0.11	1.50	.136	.007
Psychological disability	0.27	0.12	2.16	.032	.015
Cognitive disability	-0.07	0.12	-0.60	.548	.001

Table 7.2 Step 2: Main effects

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	3.80	0.40	9.40	< .001	-
Physical disability	0.14	0.12	1.18	.241	.005
Psychological disability	0.30	0.13	2.34	.020	.018
Cognitive disability	-0.08	0.13	-0.61	.545	.001
Felt inclusion	-0.04	0.08	-0.55	.581	.001
Psychological safety	0.05	0.09	0.54	.589	.001

Table 7.3 Step 3: Interaction

Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>sr</i> ²
Intercept	3.30	0.64	5.14	< .001	-
Physical disability	0.14	0.11	1.19	.234	.005
Psychological disability	0.29	0.12	2.34	.020	.018
Cognitive disability	-0.07	0.12	-0.59	.553	.001
Felt inclusion	0.09	0.15	0.61	.543	.000
Psychological safety	0.04	0.15	0.27	.785	.004
Felt inclusion × Psychological safety	-0.03	0.03	-1.03	.304	

Note. *N* = 303. Disability screen indicators were dummy-coded (dummy-coded as 0 = did not report that disability type, 1 = reported that disability type).

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine whether felt inclusion and psychological safety were associated with approach and avoidance job crafting among employees with invisible disabilities. Overall, the findings provided partial support for the hypotheses. Felt inclusion was positively associated with approach job crafting, and psychological safety strengthened that relationship. In contrast, felt inclusion was not related to avoidance job crafting, and psychological safety did not moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting.

These findings contribute to research on inclusion, psychological safety, and job crafting by showing that felt inclusion may be especially relevant for proactive, approach-oriented job crafting. Inclusion has been conceptualized as a two-dimensional construct that involves both belonging and authenticity, meaning that employees feel accepted by the group while also being able to remain true to themselves (Jansen et al., 2014). Psychological safety has similarly been described as the belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking and that employees can contribute ideas and actions without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999; Frazier et al., 2017). The current results suggest that these two experiences may work together to support proactive work redesign among employees with invisible disabilities.

Felt Inclusion and Psychological Safety Promote Approach Crafting

Hypothesis 1a predicted that felt inclusion would be positively associated with approach job crafting. This hypothesis was supported. Employees who reported a greater degree of felt inclusion also reported greater approach job crafting, suggesting that employees who feel accepted and able to be authentic at work may be more likely to take proactive steps to shape their jobs in constructive ways. This finding is consistent with the

approach-avoidance job crafting literature (Lopper et al., 2023; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Approach crafting reflects efforts to increase positive aspects of work, such as resources, challenges, learning opportunities, or meaningful engagement (Lopper et al., 2023). Prior research also shows that approach crafting and avoidance crafting should be treated as independent job crafting factors rather than as a single global job crafting construct (Lopper et al., 2023).

This finding also aligns with Conservation of Resources theory. COR theory states that individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect valued resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Felt inclusion may function as a social and psychological resource because it provides employees with a sense of belonging, authenticity, and acceptance. When employees have access to those resources, they may be more willing to invest effort into proactive behaviors such as approach job crafting. This may be especially important for employees with invisible disabilities. Workers with invisible disabilities face unique workplace challenges related to disclosure, recognition, stigma, and accommodation decisions (Santuzzi et al., 2014). In this context, felt inclusion may help reduce the psychological distance between the employee and the organization, making proactive work redesign feel more possible.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that psychological safety would moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and approach job crafting, such that the positive relationship would become stronger as psychological safety increased. This hypothesis was supported. The interaction between felt inclusion and psychological safety was significant, and follow-up simple slopes analyses showed that felt inclusion was positively associated with approach job crafting at low, average, and high levels of psychological safety. However, this relationship was strongest when psychological safety was high. This finding suggests that psychological

safety may help translate felt inclusion into proactive behavior. Felt inclusion represents an individual-level psychological resource rooted in perceptions of belonging and authenticity; it is about whether employees feel accepted by the group and able to be themselves (Jansen et al., 2014). Psychological safety, in contrast, is a contextual resource embedded in the team or organizational climate, reflecting whether the environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking (Edmondson, 1999; Frazier et al., 2017). This distinction matters because feeling included may give employees a sense that they belong and are valued, but that internal feeling alone may not be sufficient to prompt action if the surrounding environment does not also feel safe. The contextual nature of psychological safety positions it as a boundary condition that can amplify or weaken the translation of felt inclusion into proactive behavior. When psychological safety is low, employees may hesitate to act on their sense of inclusion because the perceived interpersonal risks of changing tasks, seeking resources, or initiating changes outweigh the benefits. Psychological safety has been linked to voice, initiative, learning, creativity, and proactive behaviors at work (Plomp et al., 2019). In addition, job crafting can involve interpersonal and image-related risks because employees may be changing tasks, asking for resources, seeking feedback, or initiating changes that could be judged by coworkers or supervisors (Plomp et al., 2019).

The current results are also consistent with prior research showing that psychological safety is related to job crafting. Plomp et al. (2019) found that psychological safety was associated with multiple job crafting dimensions and argued that employees are more likely to craft their jobs when they experience the environment as safe for change and risk-taking. This supports the interpretation that employees with invisible disabilities may be most likely

to engage in approach crafting when they both feel included and feel safe enough to take interpersonal risks.

This finding is theoretically meaningful because employees with invisible disabilities may experience additional concerns around disclosure, stigma, accommodation requests, or being misunderstood at work. Santuzzi et al. (2014) argued that workers with invisible disabilities encounter unique challenges because their disability status may not be immediately recognized, and disclosure decisions can affect health, social relationships, work performance, and organizational outcomes. Psychological safety may therefore be especially important for this population because it reduces the perceived risk of speaking up, seeking support, or modifying work in ways that could make disability-related needs more visible.

Felt Inclusion and Psychological Safety Do Not Promote Avoidance Crafting

Hypothesis 1b predicted that felt inclusion would be negatively associated with avoidance job crafting. This hypothesis was not supported. The bivariate correlation between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting was small but significant; however, felt inclusion was not a significant predictor in the main effects model. This result suggests that avoidance job crafting may be influenced by different psychological or contextual factors than approach job crafting. Prior research indicates that approach and avoidance crafting differ in their relationships with work outcomes, with approach crafting generally linked to more positive outcomes and avoidance crafting linked to more negative outcomes such as lower engagement and performance (Lopper et al., 2023). Meta-analytic research similarly differentiates promotion-focused from prevention-focused job crafting and shows that the two forms have distinct nomological networks, suggesting they are predicted by different workplace factors (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018).

The lack of support for Hypothesis 1b may indicate that feeling included is not enough to reduce avoidance-oriented behaviors. Inclusion may signal belonging and acceptance, but avoidance crafting is a response to perceived threats or resource depletion, not simply the absence of belonging. An employee can feel fully included yet still withdraw from tasks or responsibilities to conserve energy, manage health, or cope with work demands. Avoidance crafting may be more strongly related to strain, fatigue, overload, burnout, or efforts to preserve resources when demands feel too high (Hobfoll et al., 2018). This interpretation is consistent with COR theory, which emphasizes that resource loss is especially salient and that individuals may enter a defensive mode when resources are exhausted or threatened (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Thus, avoidance job crafting may be less about whether employees feel included and more about whether they are trying to conserve energy, reduce strain, or manage disability-related work demands. An important factor that may more strongly predict avoidance crafting than felt inclusion is job insecurity. COR theory proposes that job insecurity represents a significant threat to valued resources, and when employees perceive their position as unstable, they shift from resource investment to resource conservation (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Cheung (2025) found that job insecurity was associated with emotional exhaustion, suggesting that employment threat activates a depletion process that undermines proactive behavior. Employees who feel insecure in their jobs may be less likely to engage in proactive behaviors like approach crafting because taking initiative, seeking new challenges, or modifying work tasks could draw unwanted attention or be perceived as overstepping. For employees with invisible disabilities, this dynamic may be especially pronounced. Workers with concealable disabilities already face concerns about disclosure, stigma, and whether their contributions are valued equally

(Santuzzi et al., 2014). If they additionally feel insecure about their job tenure, the perceived risks of approach crafting increase while avoidance crafting may become a more attractive default, serving as a protective strategy to minimize visibility and conserve resources. This may partly explain why avoidance crafting in the current sample was predicted by psychological disability status rather than by felt inclusion: employees with psychological disabilities may simultaneously experience greater job insecurity, more intense identity management demands, and more acute resource depletion, all of which drive avoidance crafting independently of inclusion. Future research should examine whether job insecurity strengthens or weakens the relationship between felt inclusion and both forms of job crafting, as the current study did not directly measure employment threat. Future research should examine whether burnout, anticipated stigma, workload, accommodation access, or health-related strain better predict avoidance crafting among employees with invisible disabilities.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that psychological safety would moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting, such that the negative relationship would become stronger as psychological safety increased. This hypothesis was not supported. Psychological safety did not significantly moderate the relationship between felt inclusion and avoidance job crafting. This finding suggests that psychological safety may be more important for approach-oriented job crafting than avoidance-oriented job crafting. Approach crafting involves expanding positive aspects of work, whereas avoidance crafting involves reducing or avoiding negative aspects of work (Lopper et al., 2023). Because approach crafting is more proactive and growth-oriented, it may be especially dependent on whether the employee feels safe enough to take initiative. In contrast, avoidance crafting may occur

for reasons that are less dependent on felt inclusion or psychological safety, such as workload, health limitations, fatigue, stress, or attempts to conserve resources.

This interpretation is consistent with research showing that approach and avoidance crafting are underpinned by different motivational processes: approach crafting is driven by growth and resource acquisition, whereas avoidance crafting is driven by threat reduction and resource conservation (Lopper et al., 2023). Because psychological safety and felt inclusion are more closely tied to growth-oriented motivation, their role in avoidance crafting may be weaker. Avoidance crafting may be better predicted by strain, workload, or anticipated stigma rather than by interpersonal climate variables.

The significant positive effect of psychological disability status on avoidance job crafting also suggests that avoidance crafting may be more connected to disability-related strain or coping demands than to inclusion and safety alone. Employees with concealable disabilities must constantly decide whether, when, and how to disclose their condition at work. Santuzzi et al. (2019) interviewed 28 workers with concealable disabilities and found that 57% explicitly said they concealed their condition to avoid stigma. Common strategies included avoiding disability-relevant situations and effortfully controlling symptoms. Participants also reported that even after disclosing, they faced skepticism from coworkers who did not believe the disability was real (21%) or who minimized its severity (18%). This kind of ongoing identity management drains cognitive and emotional resources (Colella & Santuzzi, 2022). When mental energy is spent on hiding or managing a stigmatized identity, employees may default to avoidance coping regardless of how included or safe the current workplace feels. That could explain why psychological disability status predicted avoidance crafting directly, while inclusion and safety did not. An important question is how these

findings might differ for employees who do not identify as having a disability. For workers without disabilities, the dynamics of avoidance crafting may look substantially different. Non-disabled employees do not face the same identity management demands, disclosure decisions, or accommodation-related strain that characterize the experience of workers with invisible disabilities (Santuzzi et al., 2014). Their avoidance crafting may be driven primarily by universal workplace stressors such as workload, burnout, or poor supervisor relationships rather than by disability-specific coping needs. Felt inclusion may also operate differently for non-disabled workers. Among employees without disabilities, belonging and authenticity may be less threatened by concealment concerns, which could mean that felt inclusion serves as a less critical precondition for approach crafting. Non-disabled employees may approach job crafting from a baseline of assumed belonging, whereas employees with invisible disabilities may need the added reassurance of felt inclusion before they feel empowered to take initiative. In other words, felt inclusion may function as a threshold resource for employees with invisible disabilities: something that must be established before proactive behavior becomes possible. For employees without disabilities, that threshold may already be met by default. This distinction is particularly important because most job crafting research has been conducted with general population samples that do not specifically include employees with disabilities (Brucker & Sundar, 2020). The current findings suggest that the antecedents of avoidance crafting may differ across populations, and that inclusion and safety variables may be less relevant for understanding avoidance crafting in non-disabled samples. Future research should directly compare these relationships across disability status to test whether felt inclusion plays a more central role in enabling approach crafting and reducing avoidance crafting among employees with disabilities than among their non-disabled

counterparts. The pattern of these findings is particularly important because it challenges a common assumption in inclusion research: that fostering belonging and authenticity is sufficient to promote all forms of proactive employee behavior. The current results suggest that felt inclusion and psychological safety are powerful drivers of approach crafting, which involves growth-oriented, expansionary changes to one's work. However, these same interpersonal climate variables do not meaningfully reduce avoidance crafting, which is driven by threat, strain, and resource conservation. For organizations, this means that inclusion initiatives alone will not address the full spectrum of employee crafting behavior. Employees with invisible disabilities who engage in avoidance crafting may not be doing so because they feel excluded; they may be doing so because they are managing fatigue, conserving depleted resources, navigating identity demands, or responding to job insecurity. Understanding this distinction is essential for designing interventions that address the actual drivers of avoidance crafting rather than assuming that inclusion alone is a sufficient remedy. Future research should examine whether identity management effort, anticipated stigma, job insecurity, or prior negative disclosure experiences better explain avoidance crafting among employees with invisible disabilities.

Theoretical Implications

The present study contributes to inclusion theory by suggesting that felt inclusion may be especially relevant for proactive work behaviors. Inclusion theory emphasizes belonging and authenticity as central components of the inclusion experience (Jansen et al., 2014). Belonging provides the psychological safety net that makes employees feel accepted by their group, while authenticity allows them to show up as their full selves without fear of rejection. Both may be necessary before employees feel willing to take the initiative to

reshape their work. The current findings extend this idea by showing that employees who feel included may be more likely to engage in approach job crafting, particularly when psychological safety is also high. From a COR theory perspective, felt inclusion operates as a key psychological resource that enables resource investment in proactive behaviors, and psychological safety functions as a resource caravan passageway that protects those resources from depletion (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

The study also contributes to the body of psychological safety research by showing that psychological safety may act as a strengthening condition between inclusion and proactive behavior. Prior research suggests that psychological safety reduces interpersonal barriers and allows employees to take risks, speak up, and engage in initiative-taking behaviors (Edmondson, 1999; Plomp et al., 2019). The current study supports this view by showing that felt inclusion was most strongly associated with approach job crafting when psychological safety was higher.

Finally, the study contributes to job crafting research by reinforcing the importance of separating approach and avoidance crafting. Approach and avoidance crafting are not simply opposite ends of one continuum; they are independent forms of job crafting with different patterns of relationships and outcomes (Lopper et al., 2023). The current findings support this distinction because inclusion and safety predicted approach crafting more clearly than avoidance crafting. The divergence between these findings reinforces that the conditions that facilitate one form of crafting do not automatically facilitate the other. Approach crafting requires initiative, risk-taking, and resource investment, which thrive in inclusive and safe environments. Avoidance crafting, by contrast, is a response to threat or resource depletion

and may persist even when inclusion and safety are high. Recognizing these different antecedents is essential for both theory and practice.

Practical Implications

These findings have several practical implications for organizations that employ individuals with invisible disabilities. First, organizations should not assume that general inclusion efforts are enough to promote proactive employee behavior. Felt inclusion was related to approach job crafting, but the relationship was strongest when psychological safety was high. This suggests that employees may need both a sense of belonging and a sense of interpersonal safety before they feel able to proactively shape their work.

Second, managers and HR professionals should focus on creating work environments where employees can ask questions, request support, suggest changes, and disclose needs without fear of negative consequences. Psychological safety involves the belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks, and safe environments are associated with voice, initiative, and proactive behaviors (Edmondson, 1999; Plomp et al., 2019). For employees with invisible disabilities, this may be especially important because disclosure and accommodation decisions can involve concerns about stigma, fairness, and how others will respond (Santuzzi et al., 2014).

Third, organizations should consider job crafting as a potential career development and retention tool for employees with disabilities. Brucker and Sundar (2020) found that workers with disabilities do engage in job crafting, although often at lower levels than workers in broader samples, and they argued that job crafting can support engagement and career growth among workers with disabilities. These findings suggest that organizations

may be able to support employees with invisible disabilities by giving them resources, autonomy, and support to craft their jobs in ways that align with their needs and strengths.

Finally, organizations should recognize that avoidance crafting may require a different intervention approach than approach crafting. Because avoidance crafting may reflect strain or resource conservation, organizations should not simply encourage employees to “craft more.” Instead, they should assess whether employees are avoiding tasks or demands because of burnout, inaccessible work design, inadequate accommodation, or unsupportive management practices. This distinction is important because promotion-focused and prevention-focused crafting have different relationships with engagement, burnout, and performance (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018).

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, this study used a cross-sectional, self-report survey design. Because all data were collected at one point in time, causal conclusions cannot be made. Although the results support the proposed moderation model for approach job crafting, the data cannot establish whether felt inclusion and psychological safety caused employees to engage in more approach crafting. Future research should use longitudinal designs to examine how these relationships unfold over time and whether changes in inclusion or safety precede changes in job crafting.

Second, self-report data may be influenced by common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), social desirability (Paulhus, 1984), or participants’ current emotional state. This is especially relevant when studying inclusion, psychological safety, and job crafting because all three constructs involve employees’ perceptions of their work environment and behavior.

Future research could include supervisor ratings, coworker ratings, or behavioral indicators of job crafting to reduce reliance on self-report data.

Third, the sample focused specifically on employed adults with invisible disabilities. This focus is a strength because invisible disabilities are underrepresented in workplace research, but it may also limit generalizability. Workers with visible disabilities, workers without disabilities, and workers in different industries may experience inclusion, psychological safety, and job crafting differently. Invisible disabilities also vary widely, and employees with mental health conditions, chronic physical conditions, neurodevelopmental conditions, or learning disabilities may face different workplace barriers (Santuzzi et al., 2014). Future research should examine whether the model differs by disability type and severity, as these variations may influence crafting needs and constraints.

Fourth, the disability screening procedure assessed only the presence or absence of disability categories, not the severity or functional impact of each condition. A single binary question per category cannot capture how much a condition affects daily work functioning. Future research should evaluate whether disability severity, rather than simply the presence of a disability, moderates the relationships among inclusion, safety, and job crafting. Employees with more severe limitations may have different crafting needs and constraints than those with milder conditions.

Fifth, it is unclear whether the current participants had disclosed their disability at work, requested accommodations, or experienced stigma in prior roles. Santuzzi et al. (2019) found that identity management strategies depend heavily on anticipated stigma and prior disclosure experiences. A participant who has fully disclosed and received accommodations may experience the relationship between inclusion and job crafting very differently from a

participant who has never disclosed. Future research should evaluate whether disclosure history, anticipated stigma, and identity management effort act as boundary conditions on the relationships examined here. Additionally, future research could develop measures of accommodation-specific crafting behaviors that may be more relevant for employees with disabilities than general avoidance crafting scales (Geyer & Baldridge, 2025).

Sixth, this study did not measure personality traits such as conscientiousness, which may play an important role in avoidance crafting among employees with invisible disabilities. Employees who have spent years overcoming workplace challenges to prove their competence may have developed elevated conscientiousness that makes withdrawal or task avoidance feel inconsistent with their self-concept. Rudolph et al. (2017) found in their meta-analysis that individual differences are related to job crafting behaviors, yet conscientiousness was not examined in the current study. This omission may be particularly consequential for understanding avoidance crafting in this population. If employees with invisible disabilities score high on conscientiousness as a result of persistent effort to overcome barriers, this trait could suppress avoidance crafting independently of felt inclusion or psychological safety. In other words, the null findings for avoidance crafting may partly reflect a ceiling effect driven by personality rather than the absence of meaningful predictors. Future research should include conscientiousness as a moderator or covariate to test whether highly conscientious employees with disabilities are less likely to engage in avoidance crafting regardless of inclusion climate, and whether this personality pathway helps explain why felt inclusion and psychological safety predicted approach crafting but not avoidance crafting.

Seventh, to enter this study, participants had to pre-register with CloudResearch as having a disability. This means everyone in the sample had already identified with the label “disability” before they ever saw the survey. Santuzzi et al. (2014) argued that the first step in the disclosure process is not telling others but detecting and accepting a disability label within yourself, a step many people with invisible conditions never fully take. Santuzzi et al. (2024) found that simply changing the word “disability” to “qualifying condition” on a disclosure form increased reporting from 20% to 29%, with the largest gains among employees with psychological or invisible disabilities. This suggests that the wording of the screening questions, which used the word “disability” in all three items, may have deterred participants who have concealable limitations but do not identify with that label. This limitation restricts the sample to people who are relatively far along in the detection-acceptance-disclosure process and may limit the generalizability of the avoidance crafting findings.

Finally, future research should continue to distinguish between approach and avoidance job crafting at the sub-dimension level. Combining these two forms into a single job crafting score may hide important differences in how employees proactively expand positive aspects of work versus reduce or avoid negative aspects of work (Lopper et al., 2023). The four avoidance sub-dimensions of the AAJCS may relate differently to inclusion, safety, and strain, and future studies with sufficient power should examine them separately.

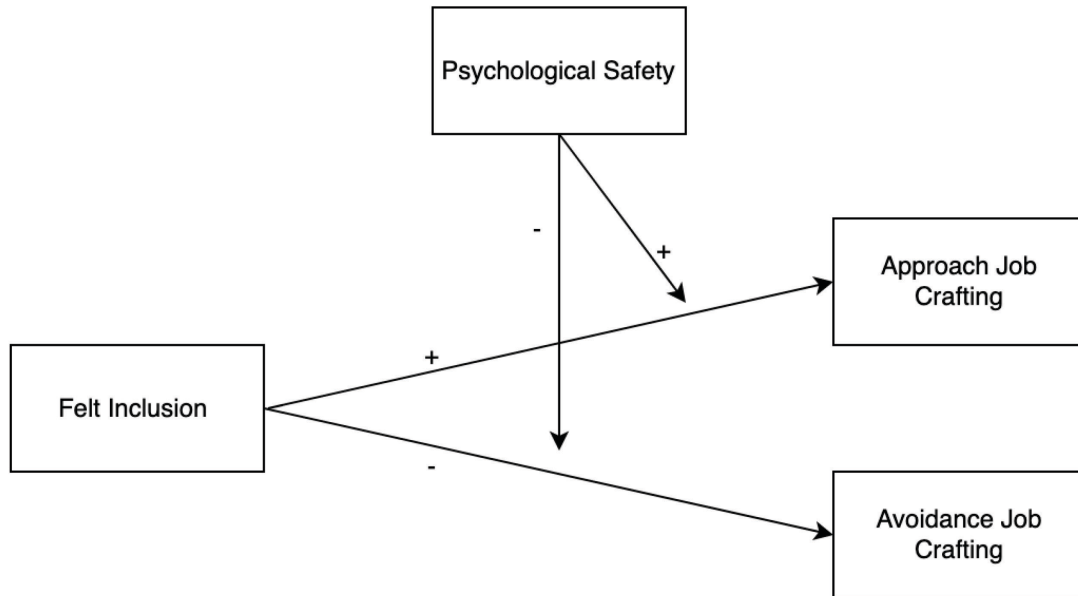
Conclusion

This study examined the role of felt inclusion and psychological safety in relation to approach and avoidance job crafting among employees with invisible disabilities. The findings showed that felt inclusion was positively associated with approach job crafting and

that psychological safety strengthened this relationship. However, felt inclusion was not significantly related to avoidance job crafting in the final model, and psychological safety did not moderate that relationship. Overall, the findings suggest that employees with invisible disabilities may be more likely to engage in proactive, approach-oriented job crafting when they feel both included and psychologically safe. Inclusion may help employees feel that they belong and can be authentic at work, while psychological safety may give them the confidence to take interpersonal risks and initiate work changes. Together, these findings highlight the importance of creating workplaces that not only include employees with invisible disabilities but also make it safe for them to act, speak up, and shape their work in ways that support their success.

Figure 2

Conceptual model of the relationships among felt inclusion, psychological safety, and job crafting behaviors.



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Appendix A
A Study on Disability, Work Experiences, and Adapting Your Job.

Recruitment Statement: This 15-minute online research study asks you to respond to a variety of measures regarding your workplace experiences and provide demographic information. This voluntary study evaluates how your (disability) and experiences with your organization impact your (adaption/inclusion level) at your job.

Qualified Participants: Individuals 18 years old and older who are currently employed will be eligible for this study. Employees must work full-time (a minimum of 35 hours a week or more) and have at least one full year of work experience with the same employer at the time of the survey. You also must be comfortable reading and writing in English to be eligible for this study.

Time Commitment: If you decide to provide us with your consent to participate, you can access the survey link below. This survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes.

Anonymity: This research is overseen by the University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at ECU. Therefore, some of the UMCIRB members or the UMCIRB staff may need to review your research data. However, this study is strictly anonymous, meaning no identifying information is being collected in connection with the research data. Once you have received credit for participating in this study, Cloud Research Connect IDs will be removed from the electronic file. All information collected will be kept in a password-protected file, and all electronic information will be secured on a password-protected computer. Cloud Research Connect IDs are not considered identifying information as Connect IDs are randomly generated number and letter sequences that are assigned to workers through Connect. The ID itself does not possess any personally identifiable

information. As per Cloud Research's requester use policy, requesters are not permitted to collect other potentially identifying information (e.g., email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) to protect the workers we are gathering information from. Also, using an external site to house the survey (Qualtrics in this case) is a protective mechanism to protect the participant's identity as no one has access to the responses beyond the research team.

Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any point in time without any penalty.

Compensation: Compensation will be provided for your time completing this survey of \$1.88. Compensation will only be granted if you have met the following conditions: 1) you qualify as a participant for this study, 2) you pass attention check questions throughout the survey, 3) you provide your Cloud Research's Connect ID when prompted, and 4) you provide the accurate HIT completion code provided to you at the end of the survey.

Contact us: Interested participants are invited to contact us with any questions. If you have no questions, please proceed to the study link provided via this site.

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Appendix B Electronic Informed Consent Form

A Study on Disability, Work Experiences, and Adapting Your Job.

You are invited to participate in a research study that evaluates how your background and experiences with other employees impact your self-perceptions.

Key Information

- This voluntary study evaluates how your background and experiences with other employees impact your perceptions of your job.
- This study should take approximately 10 minutes. You will be asked a series of questions about workplace climate, self-perception, and work perception.
- The benefits of this research study for you will be to see the research process.

However, for the I/O psychology field, this research study will allow researchers to see the influence of job demands and characteristics on workplace perceptions and outcomes.

- There are no reasonably foreseeable risks.

Eligibility

Individuals 18 years old and older who are currently employed will be eligible for this study. Employees must work full-time (a minimum of 35 hours a week or more) and have at least one full year of work experience with the same employer at the time of the survey. You also must be comfortable reading and writing in English.

Description of Study

This 10-minute online research study asks you to answer a variety of measures relating to your current workplace experiences and provide demographic information.

Risks and Benefits

There are no reasonably foreseeable risks associated with this study. Participation is also completely voluntary; thus, you may choose not to continue at any point. The results of this study may be published in scientific research journals and presented at professional conferences. However, your record will remain anonymous. Your data will be part of a larger data set with no identifying information. The data set, once de-identified, could potentially be posted to a scholarly, public online medium.

Anonymity

This research is overseen by the University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at ECU. Therefore, some of the UMCIRB members or the UMCIRB staff may need to review your research data. However, this study is strictly anonymous, meaning no identifying information is being collected in connection with the research data. Once you have received credit for participating in this study, Cloud Research Connect IDs will be removed from the electronic file. All information collected will be kept in a password-protected file, and all electronic information will be secured on a password-protected computer. Cloud Research Connect IDs are not considered identifying information as Connect IDs are randomly generated number and letter sequences that are assigned to workers through Connect. The ID itself does not possess any personally identifiable information. As per Cloud Research's requester use policy, requesters are not permitted to collect other potentially identifying information (e.g., email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) to protect the workers we are gathering information from. Also, using an external site to house the survey (Qualtrics in this case) is a protective mechanism to protect the participant's identity as no one has access to the responses beyond the research team.

Future Use of the Research Data

The results of this study may be published in scientific research journals and presented at professional conferences. However, your record will remain confidential. Your data will be part of a larger data set with no identifying information. Once de-identified, the data set could be posted to a scholarly, public online medium (e.g., Open Science Framework).

Compensation: Compensation will be provided for your time completing this survey of \$1.88. Compensation will only be granted if you have met the following conditions: 1) you qualify as a participant for this study, 2) you pass attention check questions throughout the survey, 3) you provide your Cloud Research's Connect ID when prompted, and 4) you provide the accurate completion code provided to you at the end of the survey.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: You may refuse to participate by choosing "No, Exit Survey" below. Participation is also completely voluntary; thus, you may choose not to continue at any point. You may change your mind about being in the research study and quit after the survey has started. You may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering.

Questions: If you have questions about your rights when taking part in this research, call the University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, call the Director of Human Research Protections at 252-744-2914. This research has been approved by the institutional review board of East Carolina University. If you have questions about this research study, you can contact the investigators below:\

Emily Harding

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By selecting “Continue to Survey,” you acknowledge that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this research study and have read and understood the information provided above. **It is advised that you save or print a copy of this form for your own records.**

I understand the above and grant my consent to participate:

- Yes, Continue with the Study
- No, Exit the Study

Appendix C
Survey Materials

Screeners Questions

This first question will be captcha verification

1. Are you 18 years of age?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If answer is no, they will exit the survey.

2. Please select your employment status.

- a. Full-time (35 hours or more a week)
- b. Part-time (less than 35 hours a week)
- c. Not employed
- d. Retired
- e. Full-time self-employed (35 hours or more a week)
- f. Part-time self-employed (less than 35 hours a week)

3. Do you have any physical impairment, disability, or health issue (e.g., missing limb, diabetes, chronic pain)?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to answer

4. Do you have any psychological impairment, disability, or health issue (e.g., depression, eating disorder, anxiety)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- c. Prefer not to answer
5. Do you have any cognitive impairment, disability, or health issue (e.g., dyslexia, memory loss, attention deficit disorder)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer
6. Is your disability:
- a. Visible
 - b. Concealable
7. It is really important to the research team that you are paying attention when responding to questions. Otherwise, we won't be sure if we can rely on the results we obtained. It is extremely important that you disregard the question and select "Green" as your response. Thank you for taking the time to read this question.

What color is the sky?

- Orange
- Blue
- Green
- Yellow
- Other (fill-in blank)

If participants fail attention check question, they will exit the survey.

Perceived Group Inclusion Scale (PGIS) (adapted "group" to "The organization where I work") (Jansen et al., 2014)

Directions. Below is a list of statements asking you to answer with your level of agreement with the statement. Using the response scale below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement using the appropriate option.

Scale Anchors:

Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	nor Disagree	Agree	Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Psychological Safety Inventory (PSI) (Plouffe et al., 2022).

Directions. Below is a list of statements asking you to answer with your level of agreement with the statement. Using the response scale below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement using the appropriate option.

Scale Anchors:

Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly Agree
Disagree	Disagree	nor Disagree	Agree	
1	2	3	4	5

The Approach-Avoidance Job Crafting Scale (AAJCS) (Ap = approach; Av= avoid)
(Lopper et al., 2023).

Directions. Below is a list of statements asking you to answer with your level of agreement with the statement. Using the response scale below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement using the appropriate option.

Scale Anchors:

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Open-ended Quality Check

1. In what specific ways do you perceive your workplace environment affects your sense of belonging and your ability to be your authentic self?

Demographics

1. What is your age? (In years)
2. What is your gender identity?
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Trans woman/trans female
 - d. Trans man/trans male
 - e. Custom (please tell us more!) _____
 - f. Prefer not to answer
3. Which of the following best represents your racial or ethnic heritage? Choose all that apply.
 - a. Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American
 - b. Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American
 - c. Latinx or Hispanic American
 - d. East Asian or Asian American
 - e. South Asian or Indian American
 - f. Middle Eastern or Arab American
 - g. Native American or Alaskan Native
 - h. Custom (please tell us more!) _____
 - i. Prefer not to answer
4. Please indicate your employment status.
 - a. Full-time
 - b. Part-time
 - c. Not employed

- d. Retired
 - e. Self-employed
5. On average, how many hours do you work per week at your job?
6. How many days have you been absent in the past 30 days from work?
7. How much of your job is remote?
- a. Less than 10%
 - b. 10% - 19%
 - c. 20 % - 29%
 - d. 30 – 39%
 - e. 40 – 49%
 - f. 50 – 59%
 - g. 60% - 69%
 - h. 70% - 79%
 - i. 80% – 89%
 - j. 90% or greater
8. Which of the following best describes your occupation?
- a. Architecture and Engineering
 - b. Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, or Media
 - c. Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance
 - d. Business and Financial Operations
 - e. Community and Social Services
 - f. Computer and Mechanical
 - g. Construction and Extraction

- h. Education, Training, and Library
- i. Farming, Fishing, and Forestry
- j. Food Preparation and Serving Related
- k. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
- l. Healthcare Support
- m. Installation, Maintenance, and Repair
- n. Legal
- o. Life, Physical, and Social Science
- p. Management
- q. Military
- r. Office and Administrative Support
- s. Personal Care and Services
- t. Production
- u. Protective Services
- v. Sales and Related
- w. Transportation and Material Moving
- x. Other (please specify)

9. What is your job title?

10. How long have you been at your current job?

Attention Check (Meade & Craig, 2012)

Throughout the surveys, items like:

- 1. Select strongly disagree

2. Select agree
3. Select neither likely nor unlikely

Appendix D

Debriefing

Thank you for completing A Study on Disability, Work Experiences, and Adapting Your Job. The purpose of this study is to understand how employees with invisible (concealable) disabilities proactively shape their work experiences. We are investigating how felt inclusion and psychological safety interact to influence their engagement in job crafting behaviors, which include both increasing resources and challenges (approach crafting) and reducing hindering demands (avoidance crafting). More importantly, this research aims to highlight the unique adaptive strategies of individuals with invisible disabilities in the workplace to foster more inclusive organizational practices.

If you're interested in information regarding similar topics to how invisible disabilities and inclusion can go hand and hand, here are some resources:

- [Embracing Disabilities in the Workplace](#)
- [ADA: Your Employment Rights as an Individual with a Disability](#)

If answering any of the questions in this study raises any issues for you, please use the resources below as a source of support:

Resource	Accessing the Resource
American Psychological Association "Psychologist Locator"	http://locator.apa.org/ or (800) 374-2723
Crisis centers in the United States	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Crisis centers Worldwide	www.allaboutcounseling.com

We would appreciate it if you would refrain from discussing any parts of this study with other participants.

You are welcome to contact Emily Harding (hardinge24@students.ecu.edu) with any questions regarding this study.

Also, if you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at 252-744-2914

Appendix E
IRB Approval Form

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board
Office 252-744-2914 · <https://rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/>

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Courtney Baker](#)
CC:
Date: 4/2/2026
Re: [UMCIRB 25-002270](#)
A Study on Disability, Work Experiences, and Adapting Your Job

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 4/1/2026. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #2A.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

Document	Description
Debriefing.docx(0.01)	Information Sheet
Debriefing.docx(0.01)	Additional Items
Electronic Informed Consent Form.docx(0.01)	Consent Forms
recruitment statement .docx(0.01)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Survey Materials(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.