

# Employee Proactive Adaptive Behavior during an Abrupt Change: Insights from Knowledge Workers' Unplanned Adaptation to Digital Collaboration

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## Abstract

*Knowledge workers' ability to adapt to change is critical in increasingly dynamic and unpredictable work contexts. Despite abundant research on employee adaptive behavior, scholarly understanding remains scarce about employees' proactive adaptive behavior during unplanned and abrupt changes caused by external factors. In this paper, we study how knowledge workers adapted to digital collaboration during the Covid-19 crisis, i.e., a situation where change was rapid, unplanned, and even unmanaged. Based on our inductive qualitative study, we identify three types of employee adaptive behavior: reacting, developing, and institutionalizing. We further show that here organizational support and digital support have important and complementary roles in supporting employees' proactive adaptive behavior.*

**Keywords:** Knowledge workers, unplanned change, employee adaptive behavior, remote work

## 1. Introduction

In this paper, we study knowledge workers' adaptive behavior during the rapid and unplanned changes provoked by Covid-19, an external shock that disrupted employees unlike anything else in the 21st century. The subsequent lockdowns induced by governments' reaction to Covid-19 created an adaptive space (Uhl-Bien, 2021) and an opportunity to explore and experiment with new work practices (Orlikowski & Scott, 2021). However, practitioners' experiences and discourses in the media varied greatly during the pandemic: while a number of prominent corporate leaders recalled their employees to the office to benefit from serendipitous meetings, group creativity, and employee experience (Singh, 2021), other employers

took the opposite approach and allowed employees to work from home or from any location (Choudhury et al., 2021). A majority of knowledge workers enjoyed such new flexibility and autonomy (van Zoonen et al., 2021), with some even refusing to return to their offices and old working behavior (Barrero et al., 2021), culminating in the phenomenon of the 'great resignation' discussed primarily in the US media. However, remote work also gave rise to virtual meeting marathons and increased email traffic (DeFilippis et al., 2020), as well as exacerbating social isolation and the strain on employees, resulting in an increased concern for their well-being and retention (Shan & Tang, 2020; van Zoonen et al., 2021). Clearly, employees and organizations adapted to the sudden change differently. In the context of abrupt and unplanned change, employees had to discover ways to adapt with little or no support from management, and, while some adapted better than others, we lack a scholarly understanding of how and why this was the case.

Understanding employees' proactive adaptive behavior during rapid change is critical for both individual and organizational job performance (Cullen et al., 2014), especially in current work contexts increasingly characterized by dynamism and unpredictability (Malhotra, 2021). Despite abundant research on individual and organizational change at the workplace, scholarly knowledge on employees' adaptive behavior during unplanned and abrupt changes caused by external factors remains scarce (Doeze Jaeger et al., 2022). In contrast to planned organizational change that involves deliberate activities designed to move the organization from its present state to a desired future state (Harigopal, 2006; Stouten et al., 2018), our study's context of abrupt and unplanned change caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is different. When knowledge workers were mandated to work at home,

many had little experience in remote working, no time to prepare, no ongoing organizational change management program, and little support from leadership (Donati et al., 2021).

In this study, we ask: *How did employees adapt to remote work during the Covid-19 crisis?* By forcing employees and organizations to adapt rapidly, Covid-19 created an illuminating context for understanding how and why knowledge workers adapt in varying ways to rapid, unplanned, and largely unmanaged change. Based on our interest in employees' proactive adaptive behavior we analyzed how different organizational contexts affect employee adaptive behavior. Based on an inductive qualitative analysis of 23 knowledge workers' adaptive behavior, we identify three different types of employees' adaptive behavior, namely *reacting*, *developing*, and *institutionalizing*. Strikingly, we find that reactive adaptive behavior is related to lower perceived organizational and digital support, whereas proactive adaptive behaviors of the developing and institutionalizing types are related to higher organizational and digital support.

We contribute to the literature on employees' adaptive behavior to abrupt and unplanned change in organizations. The majority of this literature has focused on employees as recipients of planned change instead of as actors proactively dealing with unplanned change (Stouten et al., 2018).

In the following we introduce our conceptual framework, describe our methods, present our findings, and explicate our contribution. We conclude with relevant implications for research, practice, and future research.

## 2. Employees' adaptive behavior

Employees' adaptive behavior has been studied through different theoretical lenses and related concepts (Stouten et al., 2018). Prior research on change recognizes that individual employees' dispositional differences and characteristics influence their abilities and personal preferences for adaptive behavior (Oreg et al., 2011). A review of sixty years of empirical research on organizational change (Oreg et al., 2011) reveals how change recipients' characteristics and their cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions, as well as the perceived benefit/harm, content, process, and change consequences, impact their reactions to change. Thus, employees' proactive behavior involving risk may vary (Hughes et al., 2018). Employees' adaptive behavior has been examined by differentiating between abilities, motivations, and opportunities within the so-called AMO framework (Ajzen, 1991), which is influenced by organizational context and related practices (Stouten et al., 2018).

However, much of the scholarly and managerial literature on organizational change focuses on employees as "recipients of change" who adopt and use new practices (Stouten et al., 2018, p. 768). Therefore, despite the vast body of research conducted on organizational change and individual adaptive behavior, our understanding of employees' proactive, adaptive behavior during unplanned change remains severely limited—although such insight is critical for understanding abrupt and unplanned change, which, furthermore, is often unmanaged.

For instance, self-leadership skills are critical in employees' adaptive behavior (Razmerita et al., 2021) and new hybrid ways of working (Malhotra, 2021). Marques-Quinteiro et al. (2019) have also found that employee skills for self-leadership affect employees' adaptive performance. According to Petrou et al. (2018), job-crafting is crucial for organizational change as employees find ways to craft their job design, ask for help, or minimize job-related challenges (see also Vough et al., 2017).

Accordingly, in this study on employee adaptive behavior in abrupt, unplanned, and largely unmanaged change, we are especially interested in how the organizational context supports (or hinders) knowledge workers' adaptive behavior because, importantly, the role played by organizational context is critical in supporting employees who became unable to rely on peers and leaders in the way they had prior to (and would again after) the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 2.1. Organizational support

Organizational support and learning environment have been identified as antecedents for employees' adaptive behavior (Park & Park, 2019; see also Gigliotti et al., 2019). In a cross-sectoral study, Cullen et al. (2014) find that perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) mediates employees' adaptability and perceptions of change-related uncertainty, as well as employee satisfaction and performance. Kurtessis et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis of perceived organizational support (POS) suggests that higher POS is related to behavioral outcomes that include increased in-role performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and reduced withdrawal behavior. Furthermore, POS may also serve as a stronger indicator of self-efficacy in the absence of performance feedback from other sources. What is more, they also suggest that POS may encourage greater job-related efforts, active coping strategies, and enhanced performance (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

## 2.2. Digital organizational support

In the context of digital collaboration, a sociomaterial approach (Orlikowski, 2007) considers the technological dimension of remote work in dispersed organizations. Technological tools and systems enable remote work and digital collaboration by collecting, storing, and sending information within an organization and between colleagues (e.g., Bélanger et al., 2013). Digital support involving digital tools and systems consists of both the tools (e.g., hardware, software, laptops, internet access, phones) and training on using these tools in remote interactions, that is, the skills and competencies to use those tools (Bentley et al., 2016). Such ‘digital organizational support’ can be seen to serve both the work-related purpose of supporting individual and collective work and the relational purpose of supporting socio-emotional processes within the organization (Baker et al., 2006).

As we are especially interested in employees’ proactive behavior in digital collaboration, we draw on Kim et al.’s (2011) definition of employees’ change-supportive behavior as “actions employees engage in to actively participate in, facilitate, and contribute to a planned change” (Kim et al., 2011, p. 1664). Although this definition is situated within the context of planned change, it remains one of the few definitions that treats employees as active participants, and, hence, is a fruitful starting point for studying employee behavior during abrupt and unplanned change.

To understand and explain employees’ proactive adaptive behavior, we analyze interview data on employee adaptive behavior and related organizational factors during the abrupt and unplanned change provoked by Covid-19. Specifically in the context of this paper, we focus on the adaptive behavior of knowledge workers working on tasks that require interdependent collaboration with other organizational members and stakeholders.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1. Research context and design

This study is part of a larger research project, for which we collected quantitative and qualitative longitudinal data on how employees experience their changing work environment and the extent to which they can adapt to these circumstances.

### 3.2. Data collection

Quantitative data collection was conducted from March 2020 to March 2021. We selected knowledge workers with interdependent tasks to capture knowledge

work that is increasingly typically conducted in projects and teams. This was motivated by the empirical research conducted on work productivity during Covid-19, as well as commonly held beliefs amongst the public, suggest that knowledge workers with interdependent tasks have struggled to adapt to remote work due to challenges inherent in coordination and communication (Gibbs et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022).

Between late June and early September 2021, we interviewed 23 knowledge workers from the private and public sectors through Microsoft Teams (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1. Key informants**

<b>Demographics</b>	
Male	7 (30 %)
Female	16 (70 %)
Average age	48.7 years (24–64)
<b>Working time with current employer</b>	
Average	10.3 years (0 – 25)
<b>Sector</b>	
Public or government	16
Private sector	2
Academy	3
Municipality	2
<b>Organization size</b>	
50–249	7
250-999	5
1000–1999	3
2000+	8

We interviewed 23 informants, 7 (30%) men and 16 (70%) women. The average age of the informants was 48.7 years, and they had worked for the organization for an average of 10 years. Three interviewees were in a managerial position; 9 were employees who guided others, and 11 were employees without managerial responsibilities.

Most of our interviewees, 16 in total, were from the public sector or government organizations, which is a significant aspect of our research. The remaining informants were from diverse sectors, including two from the private sector, three from the education sector, and two from the municipality. The background organizations of the interviewees were also diverse in size, with 7 organizations having 50-249 employees, 5 with 250-999 employees, 3 with 1000-1999 employees, and 8 with more than 2000 employees.

The co-authors and a research assistant trained by the co-authors conducted the interviews; all interviews

were conducted in a positive atmosphere, and all informants agreed to additional interviews if needed.

### 3.3. Data analysis

We started by reading through the interviews and discussing them with the co-authoring team. We first coded three interviews in parallel to compare our analysis, subsequently reflecting on our emerging findings in several meetings. Two co-authors coded all interviews by using inductive data analysis and the Gioia method (Gioia et al., 2013, see Figure 1). We analyzed the interview data based on factors that enhanced or inhibited employees' adaptive behavior at the individual, team, organizational, and societal levels of analysis.

Based on our data, organizational context was revealed as a prominent factor in differentiating between the various types of employees' adaptive behavior.

This was also the most relevant factor in light of our interest in understanding employees' adaptive behavior in the absence of change management (and possibly even leadership) during abrupt and unplanned crises. Furthermore, all interviewees mentioned organizational factors as either inhibiting or enhancing their adaptive behavior.

In regard to the authorial team's division of labor, the first author built the initial data structure tables on employee adaptive behavior, which were discussed within the team, and coding was fine-tuned until all authors reached an agreement. The second and third authors built the initial data structure tables on organizational factors; and the fourth author participated actively in data collection, analysis, and conversations. Researcher triangulation and reflection continued until the analysis was complete. The first author led the writing process in which all authors participated.

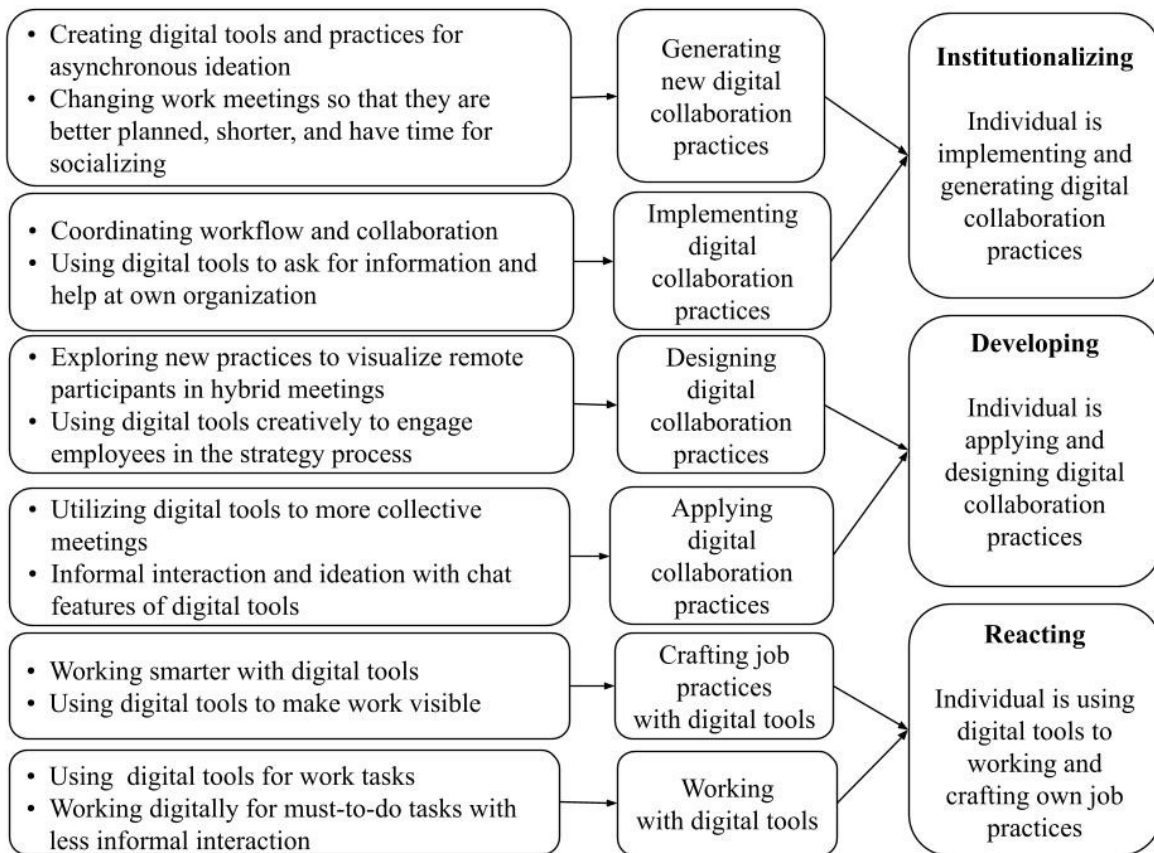


Figure 1: Data structure

## 4. Findings

Our findings reveal the existence of three different types of employees' adaptive behavior during the pandemic. First, all employees adapted by *reacting* to the changes that took place when the first lockdowns and subsequent restrictions were initiated. Second, some employees adapted by *developing* their skills and ways of working, thereby taking advantage of opportunities provided by the new situation in terms of advancing their skills and learning. Third, some employees adapted not only by reacting and developing but also by *institutionalizing* their new ways of working. We illustrate these differences in adaptive employee behavior in Figure 2 (see later in the text).

### 4.1. Adapting by reacting

The abrupt change forced individuals to adapt to new working spaces (virtual work and home office), and a number of individuals found themselves working nonstop all day. Adapting by reacting implies that an employee reacts to changes once they are at hand to solve the ongoing issues. One interviewee highlighted the role played by digital technologies here and said that sometimes they experienced "problems with digital connections, and then I just need to adapt and use different media to connect to my workplace meeting" (Interviewee 238). Some of the interviewees could have benefitted from training in how to use virtual tools, such as Microsoft Teams, databases, and other work-specific tools.

Some individuals in this group tackled the abrupt change through job-crafting and by creating new routines that benefitted from the increased autonomy and flexibility of working from home, helping them to plan their days according to individual needs. Interviewee 185 explained how "I can sleep longer and start my days at a slower pace. Also, I live next to a forest, and take some walks during the day and can build my own workday rhythm. My best time for working is after 5 pm and now I have the energy to work in the evenings as I do not have to travel to work early in the morning. Now my productivity is much better.". Interviewee 280 told us: "One of the most important things is a system for your own schedules, how you can manage your time. [...] You must reserve calendar time for your own work."

Employee behavior in this group can be characterized as fairly passive. Most continued their work digitally, while some applied digital tools to improve work ergonomics and manage their work time and rhythms. Overall, employees in this group continued *working* even if in a reactive mode while a number of them engaged in *crafting* their own jobs.

### 4.2. Adapting by developing

This type included those *applying* digital collaboration practices and *designing* new digital collaboration practices. Here, employees proactively applied novel ways of working, reorganizing, and designing organizational processes and practices in collaboration with others, using and developing practices that facilitated improvements in employees' skills and learning for the future. Applying online collaboration technologies to conduct meetings was considered both efficient and effective (Interviewee 250): "Also, even if there are online meetings, they do not take so much time, and calendars are not full of them. [...] They are also better planned, and people consider more when to have meetings."

A number of employees who adapted by developing their work also started using digital tools creatively and *designed* new digital collaboration practices. They learned new ways of working, and one interviewee related how their workplace had come to conduct problem-solving meetings once a week: "We did not have this before, and we could now discuss all the problems together and someone always finds a solution on how to move forward" (Interviewee 185). Another interviewee told how they designed new digital ways of combining online and offline collaboration, subsequently applying these to online meetings (Interviewee 258): "I have in my head the kind of combination of organizing an event where you bring certain themes, and interested people can come and [the event includes] a website or a forum where you can discuss offline when the event is not happening. We launched [virtual] morning coffee chats, the equivalent of a coffee break, which eventually ended up with 20 people."

New digital ways of collaborating further enabled smoother and more democratic approaches (Interviewee 481): "We're moving from a linear organization to an online team where everyone can comment, see what's happening, or influence what's being done. When you have a Teams tool, you create a discussion thread with X number of people involved, give them a link to the online Excel, and tell them how to prepare this research plan. So now, there are not many versions, and everyone's input is equally important and valid, even if the CEO or someone else is involved. They all see the same situation. And it doesn't go through the CEO's sieve first, but Teams enables [more democratic] decision-making." For some interviewees, moving to online meetings also generated the sense of a more equal workplace: "All meetings are moved to Teams, so it doesn't matter anymore where you live, we are all equals now" (Interviewee 481). Employees in this group

all proactively applied digital collaboration practices, and some went on to design novel digital collaboration practices.

### 4.3. Adapting by institutionalizing

signatures and now it is a common practice. Digital solutions have enabled all this.” Employees who were able to institutionalize their digital collaboration practices either implemented already established digital tools and practices or proactively generated novel ways of collaborating within their organizational context.

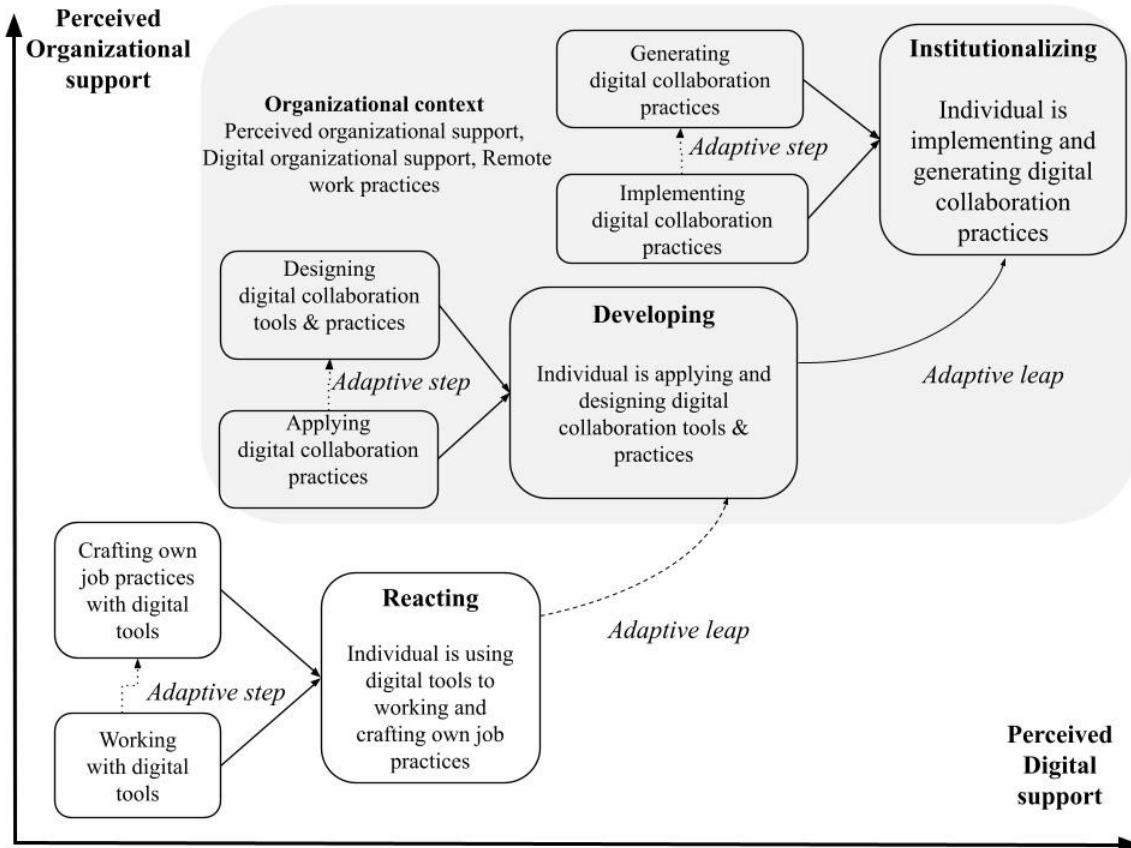


Figure 2. Knowledge workers’ adaptive behavior during abrupt and unplanned changes in digital collaboration.

The final group exhibits employee adaptive behavior of implementing adaptive changes already available in their organizations as well as *generating* and *implementing* new practices. Examples of such institutionalizing practices include well-established digital collaboration practices, newly adopted digital tools, and the possibility of working remotely even after the COVID-19 pandemic. An organization’s remote work policy played an important role, and guidelines provided a framework for employees on how much remote work they could do (Interviewee 569): “We had the opportunity to work three days a week telecommuting. Before that, it was two days a week. So, I took advantage of this opportunity.”

Some organizations had already developed digital practices and tools before the pandemic, so the shift to working online did not disrupt employees’ daily work (Interviewee 362): “We had earlier started to use digital

These practices were adopted to become part of the organization’s daily life and processes. When talking about their adaptive behavior, interviewees clearly mentioned such institutionalized practices (Interviewee 256): “We have been developing the culture of our meetings so that we have enough meetings, but just not too many and not too long. We have clear agendas but also room for discussion. They have all the elements of a good meeting; they bring a lot to problem-solving.”

Employees were proactive in developing new practices, which often became permanent practices even after the pandemic had passed. One interviewee described how she had supported the idea of network collaboration and new co-working spaces in her own organization (Interviewee 697): “I have been spreading the word about this network. [...] I have been working on getting it to the municipal strategy. Now we are planning a national-level project of rural/countryside

co-working spaces.” Furthermore, by institutionalizing these novel digital collaboration practices within their organizations or with stakeholders, employees in this group converted these novel practices from individual to collective and institutionalized work practices.

**4.3.1. Reactive and proactive employee adaptive behavior.** When analyzing the particular factors of each group, we found that the ‘reacting’ group did not enjoy access to organizational or digital support, while the proactively adaptive groups of ‘developing’ and ‘institutionalizing’ were at least partially supported by organizational digital infrastructures, thus enabling individual employees to apply or design digital collaboration practices.

Here, digital support consists of tools and technical support provided by employers to their employees, as well as jointly addressing issues related to security and data management. While the lack of digital systems or cumbersome pre-existing digital systems similarly may have limited individuals’ ability to adapt to new digital practices and remote working, fairly developed digital systems provided the necessary basic digital infrastructure that enabled individuals to develop novel working methods.

Perceived organizational support included both organizational climate and employer attitudes towards remote work and work development, with a supportive organizational climate promoting adaptive behavior amongst individuals. While perceived organizational support was important, the lack thereof was equally critical (Interviewee 511): “If the organizational climate is not trusting, then it makes everyone tired and not creative.” In addition, the institutionalizing type of adaptive work behavior was also supported by organizational processes and attitude to development (Interviewee 612): “Yes, we are very positive about development activities. If someone has developed something, there is support on taking it further.” When supervisors were available, their socio-emotional support created a positive climate: “The supervisor, the one I have now, [they] had a really nice way of asking me how I was doing” (Interviewee 469); and social interaction with co-workers was also vital when working remotely: “You get a lot of energy from the humor of your own people” (Interviewee 841). A number of interviewees regretted the loss of social interaction and a sense of community within their new virtual environment, and many organizations and employees developed virtual coffee meetings and novel, digitally mediated communication practices so as to keep together their work community. Work ergonomics also played a crucial role in workers’ well-being in remote work (Interviewee 569): “They are physical ailments, so sitting at the kitchen table for months is not

good for your back or well-being.” Employers could support well-being at work by providing ergonomic tools, such as an electric desk, which was also considered positive organizational support.

Based on our findings, we suggest that organizational digital support provides the necessary digital infrastructure enabling individual knowledge workers to proactively design digital collaboration practices, whereas perceived organizational support—i.e., organizational culture and pre-existing work practices—enables the proactive institutionalization of novel digital collaboration practices by generating and implementing them.

**4.3.2. Adaptive steps and leaps.** Employees’ adaptive work behavior emerged in smaller steps and larger leaps. Those whose adaptive work behavior we characterize as ‘reacting’ continued to *work* with digital tools, yet even here some knowledge workers took steps to *craft* their jobs. Nevertheless, numerous knowledge workers in this group experienced difficulties in leaping ahead as they lacked supportive digital and social organizational support. Those in the ‘developing’ group are characterized by proactively *applying* and *designing* digital collaboration practices, and here some knowledge workers took larger leaps and joined the ‘institutionalizing’ group, where knowledge workers’ proactive adaptive behavior can be characterized as implementing and generating digital collaboration practices that were institutionalized as organizational practices.

However, it is important to note that employees did not necessarily belong clearly to one type of adaptive behavior only, nor did the interviewed individuals experience all three types of adaptive behavior: some knowledge workers evinced the predominance of one adaptive type, e.g. ‘developing’, yet simultaneously also showed other types of adaptive behavior, e.g. ‘institutionalizing’.

Our findings show that employees’ adaptive behavior, spans from reactive—where an employee essentially operates in survival mode by using digital tools to manage his or her work—to proactive, where employees apply, develop, generate, and implement new work practices. In sum, ‘reacting’ involves working on one’s own job and doing some job-crafting. ‘Developing’ involves learning, creatively applying, and designing more efficient and effective digital collaboration practices; and ‘institutionalizing’ revolves around generating and implementing new digital collaboration practices and tools.

## 5. Discussion

Our study finds that knowledge workers differ in the type and degree of their adaptive behavior during an

abrupt and unplanned change. Some employees adapt reactively and continue or craft their own work, while others also proactively develop digital collaboration practices. Furthermore, some help their peers and organizations to adapt by generating and implementing new digital collaboration practices. The majority of prior empirical research has been based on a single organization's cross-sectional data, or on longitudinal data that does not allow the comparison of respondents' responses over time. In cases where data have been collected from several organizations, different types of change have pertained (Oreg et al., 2011), or contexts for organizational change have been highly heterogeneous, hence complicating the application of conclusions to other contexts (Stouten et al., 2018).

Our study contributes to the scholarly debate on employees' adaptive behavior in three ways. First, we distinguish between three different types of employees' adaptive behavior during abrupt, unplanned, and even unmanaged change: reacting, developing, and institutionalizing. Second, we explicate why and how employees' adaptive behavior differs depending on the organizational context at hand. Here we show the important role of organizational and digital support. Third, we argue that in addition to the social and cultural elements in the *organizational support* also *digital organizational support* is required as an integral part of the organizational context to support employees' proactive adaptive behavior (on the shielding effect of technology, see also Oikonomou et al., 2023).

Interestingly, the seminal theory on organizational support (Kurtessis et al. 2015) and related measures on perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al. 1986; Kurtessis et al., 2015) have not included technological aspects and digital elements. Yet, digital organizational support is critical for employee proactive adaptive behavior, which was well elaborated in our context of abrupt and unplanned change. In the specific context of Covid-19's abrupt move to all-remote and digital collaboration, the already existing remote work practices were also important in supporting employee proactive adaptation.

In other types of abrupt and unplanned changes, there could be other types of existing work practices. For example, in a crisis involving human health and lives, such as earthquakes or war, it could be about existing preparedness practices for rescue, additional power supply, or resilient work practices under extreme conditions.

Thus, in the context of abrupt and unplanned changes, where the employees need to proactively adapt without planned change management programs, the stronger the impersonal and system-like organizational support is, the better it enables the employee's proactive adaptive behavior. Regarding digital organizational

support, we argue, that a well-working and resilient digital infrastructure and related organizational support is becoming increasingly critical for digital collaboration in dispersed organizations.

## 5.1. Boundary conditions

Our data consists of both public and private sector knowledge workers with interdependent work tasks. Our quantitative sample consisted of 5,450 employees, and the 23 interviewees were selected from those knowledge workers who responded to all four surveys and open-ended questions. We believe that our findings on the different types of employee adaptive behavior provide initial insight into understanding employees' adaptive behavior during abrupt and unplanned change among knowledge workers in digitally developed countries.

## 5.2. Limitations and Further Research

First, our study was conducted in a Nordic country with a low level of organizational hierarchy, high levels of education and digitalization, and highly developed digital infrastructure. This invites insightful comparisons of our findings with those from less digitally developed countries and those with more hierarchical organizational traditions. Also, we did not study employee adaptive behavior in those dispersed organizations that were already operating in all-remote mode.

Second, because our study focuses only on the initial year of remote working, following interviewed knowledge workers through subsequent years would generate insight into how their adaptive work behavior develops across time. Future research could investigate adaptive behavior at the individual level (Gigliotti et al., 2019; Li et al., 2021) and how adaptive behavior changes over time, also in light of the possibility that individuals might evince proactive behavior despite low levels of perceived organizational and/or digital support.

Third, even when interdependent team tasks generate challenges for all-remote collaboration, social interaction, and related team-level support may boost individual and team-level adaptive behavior, particularly in light of Thomas and Bostrom's (2008, 2010) findings that a team's ability to change its behavior, e.g. by creating new practices or modifying the use of existing IT-tool features, has a positive effect on team adaptation.

Fourth, further research could also explore how individual adaptive behavior is related to knowledge work productivity. Here, we speculate that those who are able to adapt better are more satisfied, innovative,

willing to retain their jobs, and productive, both in the short and long run. Furthermore, when employees not only adapt their own work methods but are able to develop and transform collective work practices, i.e., promote collaboration, opportunities for higher knowledge work productivity might be generated.

Finally, it would be beneficial to develop measures first for perceived organizational support, including the currently missing digital support elements (dPOS), and employees' proactive adaptive behavior, particularly in light of the dynamic and unpredictable work context and burgeoning digital collaboration that demands self-leadership and proactive adaptive behavior (Malhotra, 2021).

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## 6. Conclusion

We remain hopeful that our study adds nuance to understanding the nature and types of proactive employees' adaptive work behavior during abrupt, unplanned, and largely unmanaged change, thereby contributing to reinforcing organizational resilience in today's turbulent times of lower predictability and higher likelihood of unforeseen disruptions.

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